

# SAINT PAULS.

JUNE, 1870.

## THE THREE BROTHERS.

### CHAPTER XLIV.

#### THE FALLING OF THE WATERS

THE readers of this history must be prepared to pass over an interval of something less than seven years from the end of the last chapter. I allow that it is a most undesirable break, but yet it has been involved from the beginning as a necessity of the narrative.

Nearly seven years had elapsed since Mr. Renton's death at the moment when we again approach Renton Manor. He died in September, and it was the beginning of August when Mrs. Renton received a note from Mr. Ponsonby, the lawyer, announcing his intention of arriving at the Manor the next day. Mrs. Renton had not improved much in health, but she had laid aside her mourning, and wore grey and violet and pretty caps once more. Her existence had known very little change during all these years. Now and then the tonics had been changed, and she had substituted for a whole year *Revalenta Arabica* for the arrowroot; but the difference was scarcely perceptible except to the maid and the cook, and I believe on the whole the arrowroot was found to agree with her best. She had taken her drive almost every day with a feeling that she was doing her duty. "My dear husband always made such a point of my drive," she said, plaintively, though for her own part she would have preferred her sofa; and so had lived on, very punctual in taking her medicine, a woman humbly conscious of fulfilling all the duties of her life. Mary Westbury had been generally her companion in these drives, and as she was younger and not so settled in mind, had sometimes, it must be allowed, felt as if life was no better than a leisurely promenade between two rows of hedgerows, sometimes green and sometimes brown. The carriage was very comfortable and the horses were very fat, and there were a great many charming points of view

within a radius of fifteen miles round Renton; but still there were moments in which Mary was such an infidel as to wish herself jogging to market in the passing cart, or carrying a basket along the road, or anywhere rather than in that luxurious corner. If anything had happened to make Mrs. Renton "put down," as people say, her carriage, that lady would have regarded it as a calamity altogether immeasurable; but I think that both she and her niece would have felt a burden taken off their minds. She would have been left at peace on her sofa, and Mary could have taken needful exercise in her own way. But such a blessing in disguise was beyond praying for. Mr. Renton, though he had been so hard upon his sons, had provided very tenderly for his wife's comfort.

Renton had been hers for these seven years, and had been kept precisely as it was when it was the home of the whole family,—not a servant dismissed nor a change made; and thus the height of comfort had been secured. Mary, too, was very comfortable. No young woman could be more so. She had a maid of her own, which would have been an impossible luxury at home, and a liberal allowance for her dress, and a fire in her room, if she chose, from October to May, or indeed all the year through, if such were her pleasure; and the freedom of various libraries, and an excellent piano, and any amount of worsted work she chose. And then the drive every afternoon, wet and dry! "So that she has the air and the change, when we poor people, who have no carriage, must stay in-doors," Mrs. Westbury said when she described her daughter's happiness. And this felicity had gone on for nearly seven years.

"I wonder what Mr. Ponsonby wants," said Mrs. Renton. "He might have come without any intimation. I am sure he generally does. Why he should send word like this, as if he had some news to bring, I cannot conceive. I do hope it is nothing about the boys."

"It cannot be anything about them," said Mary. "Consider, godmamma, you had a letter from Ben just the other day, and Frank and Alice wrote by the last mail."

"That is all very true," said Mrs. Renton; "but how can I tell that they may not have telegraphed or something? And then there is Laurie always wandering all over the world. He may have gone off, as he did the first time, without letting any one know."

"But he never would have dreamed of sending Mr. Ponsonby to tell you," said Mary. "He would have written direct. Laurie is the best correspondent of them all."

"Or he may be going to be married," said Mrs. Renton,—"*he* or Ben. By the way, he says something about Ben; but all those business people write such bad hands. Perhaps you can make it out. I am sure it is too much for me."

After this little introduction, Mary took the lawyer's letter with

some slight tremulousness. She was nearly seven-and-twenty by this time, and ought, she said to herself, to have been quite steady about such matters. Of course some day Ben would marry, and so long as it was any one who would make him happy she could only be glad. Many a wandering thought about Millicent Tracy had come into her mind. Had she been faithful to him? Had there been any intercourse between them? Had he kept steadfast to his imagination of her for all these years? That it was only an imagination, Mary felt sure. Every letter that came from Ben had caused her a certain tremor,—not, as she said to herself, that it would make any difference to her; but if he were to bind himself to a woman unworthy of him! And now that he was coming back so soon, it was with a thrill of more intense expectation than usual that she took Mr. Ponsonby's letter in her hand. But there was nothing about marrying or giving in marriage in that sober epistle. It intimated to Mrs. Renton, in the first place, that the time specified in her husband's will had nearly expired; that he had received a letter from her son Ben, informing him that he intended to meet him at the Manor, along with the other members of the family, on the 15th of September; and that accordingly Mr. Ponsonby was coming to Renton next day to go over the property with the bailiff, and see with his own eyes the condition in which everything was, that there might be no delay, when the time came, in making everything over to the heir. All that Mrs. Renton had made of this very distinct letter was the fact that the lawyer was to pay her a visit, and that there was something about Ben. But indeed Mr. Ponsonby did not write a legible hand.

"Then it is just what Ben told us about coming home," said Mrs. Renton, "though he was not so particular to me in naming the day. He said the beginning of September, if you recollect, Mary; and Frank and his wife are coming by the next mail. I am afraid the children will make a dreadful commotion in the house, and altogether it will be so odd to see Renton full of people again. Of course, Laurie is coming, too. I don't know what I shall do with them all. They can't expect me to have parties and that sort of thing for them, Mary, in my state of health?"

"No, dear godmamma," said Mary, soothingly, "they will not expect anything of the kind; and you will never think of the trouble when you have all the boys at home. Fancy Frank having boys of his own!" she cried, with a little laugh. The choice lay between laughing and crying, and the first was certainly the best.

"I hope his wife has kept up her practice," said Mrs. Renton, still with a cloud on her brow, "since that was what he married her for."

"Godmamma!" cried Mary, with consternation.

"Well, my dear, I don't know what else she had to recommend her. No family, nor connections; not a penny,—not even expectations!

If it was not for her music, what was it for? And so many women give up practice when they marry. I always forget,—is it three or four children they have?"

"Two, godmamma," said Mary, gently; "don't you remember, the poor, dear, little baby died?"

"Well; it is quite enough," said Mrs. Renton; "with nothing but their pay to depend upon. And there will be a black nurse, you may be sure, driving the servants out of their senses. But if she has kept up her practice, it will be an amusement for the boys. And things might have been worse. There might have been three families instead of one, you know, Mary; and then I think I should certainly have run away."

"Yes,—perhaps it is selfish," said Mary, "but I am glad, too, that they are not all married. It will be more like old times."

"Selfish!" said Mrs. Renton. "I can't see how it can be selfish. Of course Ben will have to marry some time or other, for the sake of the property. But I never can make out why young men marry, for my part. Haven't they everything that heart can desire; and no care, and much more petted and taken notice of in society than if they were dragging a wife about with them everywhere? A girl is quite different. She has everything to gain, you see. I often wonder whether I have been doing my duty by you, Mary, keeping you out of the way of a good establishment in life."

"Pray don't speak so, godmamma," said Mary, with a blush of indignation;—"not to me at least."

"But I do, my dear. And I am sure no one ever deserved to be comfortably settled better than you do. However, I have always found, in my experience," said Mrs. Renton, with a profound look of wisdom, "that when these things are coming they come, however quietly you may be living; and, if they are not to come, they don't, however much you may go into society. Look at Jane Sutton, who never was seen out of her father's house, and now she's Lady Egmont! I suppose we must expect Mr. Ponsonby to lunch."

"I should think he would come early," said Mary with a smile; and, as it was Mrs. Renton's hour for taking something, she went away to tell the housekeeper of the guest. And then she made a little tour of the house, peeping into the rooms, in some of which preparations had already begun. The west wing, in which "the boys' rooms" were, was all in commotion,—carpets taken up, women with pails and brooms in every corner. The only one as yet untouched was the little sitting-room, or dressing-room, attached to Ben's chamber, where his old treasures were still hanging about,—his books and his pictures, and all his knickknacks. Into this oasis Mary strayed, with a strange thrill of expectation creeping over her. Seven years! What a slice it was out of a life; and how much had happened to the others and how little to herself! Mary felt as if she had done



nothing but be driven about all these years in that most comfortable of family coaches, with her aunt by her side and a bottle of medicine in the pocket of the carriage. And now they were all coming back! To what? What change should she find in them? and ah! what changes would they find in her? Ben must be thirty-two by this time; and Mary was seven-and-twenty,—which, for a woman, is about twenty years older, as all the world knows!

As for "the Frank Rentons," they were not to be placed in the west wing at all, but in a suite of rooms over the great doorway, the guest-chambers of the house, as became their dignity as married people with children and nurses to be accommodated. How funny that was! Frank, who had always been the youngest in every way, whom they all,—even Mary herself in a manner,—had bullied and domineered over;—and here had he attained a point of social dignity to which none of the others had yet attained! Mary laughed to herself, and then she dried her eyes. It was an agitating crisis altogether, to which she looked forward with the strangest mixture of feelings. Laurie, it was true, had come home long since; and came to the Manor now and then, and had not drifted out of knowledge. But, then, one always knew exactly how Laurie would be, and it did not matter if he were in London or at the end of the world, so far as that went; but Ben——! And to think everything was going to be settled, and they were all coming home!

Mr. Ponsonby arrived next day; not, as they expected, to luncheon, but in the evening. He was an old friend of the family, and Mr. Renton, as people say, had had no secrets from him. But that was a figure of speech, for the Ponsonbys had managed the Rentons' affairs for generations, and there were no secrets to keep. "I shall want the whole day for what I have to do," he told Mary when he arrived; "so I thought it best to come overnight." And he dined with the two ladies, and did his best to make himself agreeable. His coming and his talk were the most tangible sign they had yet had that their long vigil was over, and that the tide of life was about to flow back to them. He spoke in a very guarded way, betraying nothing of the secret he had kept those seven years; but when Mrs. Renton spoke of one thing and another which she wanted to have done, Mr. Ponsonby made answers which infinitely piqued Mary's curiosity. "We must see what the will says about it," said the lawyer. "It is not worth while doing anything now till the heir is here to decide for himself. All that is the heir's business, not mine."

"Do you mean Ben?" said Mrs. Renton; for even she was moved to a little surprise.

"I cannot tell whom I mean until the will is read," he said; "but, of course, whoever is the heir will be but too happy to do what you wish, my dear Mrs. Renton. It must be a great pleasure to you to have all your boys at home."

"Ye-es," said Mrs. Renton; "but then one does not know whether they are coming to disappointment or to satisfaction! If they should have had to travel all this way for nothing, what a thing it would be,—if it were only for the expense!"

"But I trust it will be satisfaction this time, and not disappointment," said the lawyer. "I am heartily glad, for my part, that the seven years are over. I hear the boys have all done so well, which is immensely to their credit, and, of course, is just what their excellent father meant."

"I never could think what he meant," said Mrs. Renton. "Lydia always says it was her fault; but he was not a man to follow anybody's opinion but his own. As for doing well, I am not so sure about that. Ben has become a railway man;—think of that, Mr. Ponsonby! I never even approved of railroads myself. I don't see what use there is for so much hurry. I am sure I went a great deal oftener to town when we used to drive our own horses, than now that there is a railway close to the gates. But he has pleased himself, which is always something. And Laurie has pleased himself, too. He paints very pretty pictures sometimes; but I don't believe he will ever earn enough to keep him in gloves. And as for Frank,—a poor soldier with nothing but his pay and a family of little children! It is very different from what I had once hoped."

"But probably this is all over now," said Mr. Ponsonby,—"*or at least we have every reason to believe so; and in the meantime they have had their struggles, and know what they are capable of. Let us hope, my dear madam, that everything will prove to have been for the best.*"

"I don't doubt that everything is for the best," Mrs. Renton answered in plaintive tones. And then Mr. Ponsonby was left to his wine in the great old dining-room, which he had not been in since that dismal day when he read the will,—or rather the preface of the will,—to the startled family. It was a bright room enough in the morning when the sunshine came in, or on winter nights when the fire sparkled and glimmered in the wainscot; but it was very sombre in the dimness of a summer night, with one lamp on the table and the windows open, admitting the night with all its ghosts of sound and profound soft glooms. The family solicitor was not an imaginative man, and yet he could not help feeling that his old friend might come in any moment through the curtains, which hung half over the open window, and dictate to him some new condition in the will which had already wrought so much mischief. "Not a word more," Mr. Ponsonby caught himself saying; and then he roused up and went to Mary in the drawing-room, where she was seated alone, in much the same magical half-darkness as that he had left.

"I suppose it is the instinct of a Londoner," he said, "but I declare I don't think this is safe. Sitting with windows open to the

lawn, all alone at this hour! Suppose some one should walk in upon you before you had time to give an alarm?"

"Who could walk in upon me?" said Mary, laughing. "We are at Renton, you know, and not in Harley Street."

"Sure enough," said the townsman. "No, thanks; I prefer to face that window. Let me not be approached from behind; let me see what is coming, at least."

"How odd to think of such a thing!" said Mary. "I sit here every evening after godmamma has gone to bed, and one cannot live unless all the windows are open. But oh, Mr. Ponsonby, do talk to me a little! Do you think,—do you really think,—that now, at last, things will be comfortable for the boys?"

"Let us hope so," said the man of law, arranging himself comfortably in an easy-chair. "I suppose Mrs. Renton has gone to bed? Let us hope so at least."

"Hope!" cried eager Mary,—“of course we all hope; but what do you think?"

"My dear, I can't tell you what I don't know, and I must not tell you what I do know," said Mr. Ponsonby. "Do you never have any change from Renton? It is very fine air; but I don't think it is exhilarating for young people. Do you ever go out?"

"We drive every day," said Mary, with the faintest little grimace; and then she looked at her old friend, and permitted herself the relief of a laugh. "It is dismal sometimes," she said; "but when the boys are back I shall be free again, and go home."

Mr. Ponsonby looked at her in silence as she spoke. "Home" was a cottage, instead of a great house; but otherwise, in the eyes of the man accustomed to the world, there was not much difference between the one widow's house and the other. "How do these women live?" he said to himself. When the boys came home there might be a little movement, perhaps, and a feeling of life about the old place. And then she would go home! "That is just the time you ought to stay, I think, and see if they cannot make it a little more amusing for you," he said. "Do you never ride now?"

"I have no one to ride with me. I could not go out alone, you know," Mary answered, without raising her eyes.

"Well, I am not much of a man to ride with a young lady, but you shall come out with me to-morrow and go over the estate,—if there is anything you can ride in the stables. It will do you good. I must see that everything is in order for the heir. And you will not mind giving up the drive,—not for one day,—for the sake of an old friend?" said the lawyer. "Good Lord! there's a fellow coming in at the window, as I said. Ring the bell, my dear! Quick, and leave the rest to me!"

"Why, it is Laurie!" cried Mary, springing up, as Mr. Ponsonby seized the gilded stick which supported a little screen, and brandished

it in the face of the newcomer. "That is just his way, frightening people out of their wits. Come in quickly, Laurie, if it is you, and not your ghost."

"It is not my ghost," said the figure at the window, advancing to shake hands with Mr. Ponsonby, who was still a little excited. "A ghost was never so dusty nor so thirsty. I have walked down from town all the way, to get a breath of air, and very much mystified I was to see a man in the dining-room from the end of the avenue as I came along. I thought at first it must be Ben."

"So there was some one about!" said Mr. Ponsonby; "that explains my sensation. I had just been giving your cousin a lecture upon sitting alone with the windows open. Yes, Laurie, my boy, here I am, come to look over the ground for the last time, before it is given up to the heir."

"Ben will not be hard upon you," said Laurie, with a laugh; but as he spoke he looked fixedly at the solicitor, hoping,—which was like Laurie,—to beguile that astute practitioner into self-betrayal.

"I don't know anything about Ben," he answered, smiling at the simple artifice; "but I know I must set my affairs in order, and be prepared to give up my trust. I want Mary to go with me over the estate. She is moping and pale, and a brisk canter will do her good. Will you see if there is anything she can ride?"

And then there ensued a little consultation as to whether Fairy was up to it. Fairy was a pet pony, as old as the hills, who had been eating herself into a plethoric condition for years; but Mary, who was not a very bold horsewoman, believed in the venerable animal, as did every soul about Renton. "She's hold in years, but she's young at 'art, Miss; she'll carry you like a bird," was the coachman's opinion when he was called into the consultation. And then Laurie had a vast tankard brought to him, and refreshed himself after his long walk. When Mr. Ponsonby retired, the cousins stepped out again on to the lawn, and Mary looked on and talked while Laurie had his cigar. The moon, which was half over and late of rising, began to lighten slowly upwards, shining upon the river far below, while they were still left in darkness on the higher bank. "It is so strange to think we are all on the brink of a new life," Mary said, as she gazed down through an opening in the trees upon that silvery gleam, which was framed in by the dark, rustling branches. "Are we?" said Laurie, with a kind of echo in his voice. Somehow he had taken his life awry, by the wrong corner, and there did not seem vigour enough left in him to care for a new beginning,—at least for himself.

"Laurie," she said, encouraged by the darkness. He had thrown himself down in a garden-chair, and was visible only as a shadow, with a red point of cigar indicating his face, while she stood leaning on one of the lower branches of the lime tree which framed in that

glimpse of the light below. Their voices had the softened, mysterious sound which such a moment gives, and as neither of them was happy enough to draw new delight out of the influence of the night, both of them, by natural necessity, grew a little sad. "Laurie," Mary said, and faltered; sometimes I think I should like to know a little about you. I do know something about the others,—even Ben,—but you have always been a mystery to me since you first went away."

"I don't think I am much of a mystery," said Laurie, not moving from his chair.

"But you are a mystery," Mary repeated, with a little eagerness. "I don't know what has come to you,—whether it is love, or whether it is loss;—don't be angry, Laurie."

"It might be love and loss too," he said, with a little laugh, which was not cheerful, and then he rose and tossed away his cigar. "What if I were to say you were a mystery, too?" he continued, not knowing how Mary's cheeks burned in the darkness. "We all are, I suppose; and my poor old father that meant to do so well for us, and tossed us all abroad to scramble anyhow for life,—what do you say to that for a mystery? And here is the moment coming to prove which of us is preferred and which condemned. I am the poor fellow with one talent, who laid it up in the napkin. If he had not been so mean as to abuse his master, I think I should have sympathised with that poor wretch."

"I cannot say I sympathise with him," cried Mary, woman-like. "To be able to do, and not to do, that is what I cannot understand. But you have not hid your talent in a napkin, Laurie. I wish you had a better opinion of yourself."

Upon which Laurie laughed, and drew her hand through his arm, and the two strayed together, silent, down under the shadow of the trees towards the opening which looked on the river. The moon creeping higher every moment, began to thread through the bewildering maze of branches with lines and links of silver; and there was always that one brilliant spot in the midst of the river, far below them, shining like burnished silver, scarcely dimpling under the moonbeams, which seemed to swell as well as glorify the rather scanty water. Their hearts were full of wistfulness and dreams. The world lay all as dark before them as those rustling, breathing woods, with, for one, a brightness in the future which might or might not,—most probably would not,—ever be attained; and for the other, only some fanciful, silvery thread twining through the sombre life. They paused, arm-in-arm, by that beech tree at the corner where Ben and Mary had paused when he was last at home, and where he had shot that arrow at her,—as she said to herself,—of which she could still feel the point. But Laurie was very different from Ben. No spark of emotion went from one soul to the other as they stood so close and

so kindly together. They were the parallel lines that never meet,—each thinking their own thoughts, each with a sigh that was not all pain, contemplating the well-known road behind them, the invisible path before;—and all the world around lying dark and light, stirring softly, breathing softly, in the long speechless vigil which we call night.

Next day Mr. Ponsonby went over the home farm, and all the neighbouring land, inspecting everything, looking to farms, farm-buildings, drainage, timber,—all the necessities of the estate. Mary rode by his side on Fairy, who verified the coachman's verdict, and carried her mistress like a bird,—at least as nearly like a bird as Mary wished. Laurie had gone back to town that morning by the train. When his cousin returned to luncheon, freshened and roused by her ride, it seemed to her almost as if the new life had already begun. The work-people who had been sent for from town had arrived with a van full of upholstery,—bales of fresh, pretty chintz for "the boys' rooms," and new furniture for the extempore nursery. An air of movement was diffused about the whole house. The flood which had swept over Renton, almost engulfing the peace of the family, was almost over,—the waters were going down,—the household ark standing fast, and the saved ones beginning to appear at the long-closed windows. Such were Mary's feelings as she went with her aunt for that inevitable drive. To-day the hedgerows were not so monotonous; the dust was less stifling; and when they met Mr. Ponsonby on his cob, with the bailiff in attendance, the returning life rose into a sparkle and glow in Mary's face. "Her ride has done her no end of good," Mr. Ponsonby cried, waving his hand as he rode past. "Good?" said Mrs. Renton; "was there anything the matter with you, Mary? I am sure, if there is any good in riding, I wonder Dr. Mixton has never recommended it to me." And then the two drove on, as they had been driving all these seven long years.

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### THE RAVEN.

SOME days after Mr. Ponsonby's visit, Mary Westbury saw from her room, where she happened to be sitting, a carriage drive up the avenue. It was as yet only twelve o'clock, an unusual hour for visitors; and the carriage was of the order known as a fly, with just such a white horse, and coachman in white cotton gloves, as had made an important feature in the landscape to Ben Renton seven years before in Guildford Street, Manchester Square; but there was not, of course, any connection in Mary's mind between such a vehicle and her cousin's brief romance. She watched it, with a little surprise, as

it came up. Who could it be? There was, somehow, a greater than ordinary attempt to look like a private carriage about this particular vehicle, with, as might have been expected, a failure still more marked. And flys of any description were not well known at Renton. The lodge-keeper had looked at it disdainfully when she opened the gate; and the butler, who was standing at the door, received the card of the visitors with a certain mixture of condescension and contempt. "For Miss Westbury," he said, giving it to a passing maid to carry up-stairs, and only deigning, after an interval, to show the visitors into the drawing-room. The card which was brought to Mary had a very deep black border, and the name of Mrs. Henry Rich printed in the little square of white. Who was Mrs. Henry Rich? There had been very little intercourse between the Riches and the Rentons since Frank's marriage; but Mary recollected with an effort, when she turned her mind that way, that one of the sons had died some time before, and that he turned out to have been married, and to have left an unknown widow to be provided for after he died. These facts came quite dimly to her mind as she pondered the name. But she had never heard who the widow was, and could not think what a stranger in such circumstances could want with her. "I don't know them well enough to do her any good," Mary said to herself. The border was so black, and the fly had impressed her with such a feeling of poverty,—wrongly, to be sure, for of course had Mrs. Henry Rich possessed a dozen carriages she could scarcely have brought them with her to Cookesley,—that the idea of a weeping widow seeking something very like charity, was suggested to Mary by the name and the deep mourning, and the hour of the visit. Civility demanded of her that she should see this unexpected visitor. "But I must tell her we see very little of them, and that I can do nothing," Mary said to herself as she went down-stairs. She was dressed in one of her fresh, pretty muslins, pink and white, with all the pretty, crisp bits of lace and bows of ribbon that make up that *toilette fraîche et simple*, which is one of the greatest triumphs of millinery, and next to impossible to any but the rich. And a pleasant figure to behold was Mary amid the sunshine, in the calm of the stately silent house which was so familiar to her, and in which her movements were never without a certain grace. The most awkward being in the world has an advantage in her own house over any newcomer. And Mary was never awkward. The worst that could be said of her was that she was in no way remarkable. You could not specially distinguish her among a crowd as "that girl with the bright eyes," or "with the lovely complexion," or "with the fine figure." Her eyes were very nice, and so was her colour, and so was her form; but, as she herself said, her hair was the same colour as everybody else's; she was just the same height as other people; her hands and feet were of the same size; her waist the same measure



round, "I have never any difficulty about my things," Mary would say, half-laughing, half-annoyed; "everybody's things fit me;" and though she had preserved a great deal of the first fresh bloom of youth, still it was a fact quite known and acknowledged by her that the early morning and the dews were over with her. Such was the pleasant household figure, full of everything that makes a woman sweet to her own people, and yet not beautiful, which went softly into the great Renton drawing-room, in the morning sunshine, to see her visitor, not having the least fear of the stranger,—or anything but pity, and a regretful certainty that her own ministrations, which she supposed were going to be appealed to, could be of no use.

Mary went in so softly that she surprised the ladies,—for there were two of them,—in an investigation into some handsome cabinets which were in the room, and which, indeed, were perfectly legitimate objects of curiosity. But to be discovered in the midst of their researches discomposed the strangers. They stood still for a moment between her and the window,—two tall, sombre, black figures,—draped from head to foot in the heaviest mourning. They had their backs to the light, and Mary could not for the moment distinguish their faces. She went forward with her soft smile and bow; and then she made a bewildered, involuntary pause. It was many, many years since she had seen that face, and she could not remember whose it was; but yet it struck her, even in her ignorance, a curious paralyzing blow. It was the kind of blow said to be given by that mysterious monster of the seas, which the great French novelist has introduced into literature. It jarred her all over, and yet seemed to numb and take all power from her. "Mrs. Rich?" she faltered, with a wonderful mingling of recollection and ignorance; and then stood still, too much startled to say more.

"Dearest Mary, have you forgotten me altogether?" said the youngest of the two ladies, coming up to her with both hands outstretched. Still Mary did not remember whose face it was, and yet she grew faint and sick. The tall figure towered over her middle-sized head; the lovely blue eyes looked appealing into her heart. "Don't you remember Millicent?" said the sweet voice; and then her reluctant hand was taken, and those softest rose-lips touched her cheek. Mary was glad to point to a chair, and shelter her own weakness upon one beside it. "It is so unexpected," she said, making a feeble apology for her consternation; and then Mrs. Tracy came and shook hands with her, and they all sat down in a little circle, poor Mary feeling the room go round and round with her, and all her courage fail.

"You did not know me under my changed name," said Millicent; "and I am so changed, dear Mary, and you are exactly as you were,—you are not a day older;—that is the difference between living such a quiet life and being out in the world."



"I should have known you anywhere, my dear," said Mrs. Tracy, coming a little closer to Mary's chair.

"That is very strange," said Mary, recovering herself, "for I think I only saw you once. But I am very much surprised. Millicent, was it you that married Mr. Henry Rich?"

"Who else could it be?" said Millicent, slowly shaking her head with a soft pity for herself, and then she pressed her handkerchief lightly to her eyes. She was dressed in profound black, in what it is common to call the most hideous of garbs,—a widow's mourning dress. Her bonnet was of crape, with a veil attached to it, which was thrown back, showing the lovely face, just surrounded by a single rim of white. Though it goes against all ordinary canons of taste to say so, I am obliged to add that her melancholy robes were very becoming to Millicent, as indeed they are to most women. Her dazzling whiteness of complexion, the soft rose-flush that went and came, the heavenly blue of her eyes, came forth with double force from the sombre background. Poor Mary was overwhelmed by her beauty, her quiet consciousness of it, her patronage, and tone of kindness. And to come here now, at such a moment, when the world was about to begin again! It was so much her natural instinct to be courteous, that she could not make any demonstration to the contrary, but her manner, in spite of herself, grew colder and colder. The only comfort in the whole matter was that Mrs. Renton had not yet come down-stairs.

"Her happiness lasted but a very short time," said Mrs. Tracy, taking up her parable. "Such a young man, too! But my poor dear child has been very badly used. It was not only that. He died just when he ought to have been making some provision for her."

"Oh, mamma, dear, that was not poor Harry's fault!"

"But we found out afterwards," continued Mrs. Tracy, "that he had not anything like what he had given himself out to have. He had squandered his money in speculation,—that was the truth,—and now his family, instead of appreciating the position of a poor young creature thus deprived of her natural protector——"

"Oh, please," said Mary, interrupting her; "I know the Riches a little, and I'd rather not hear anything about their affairs."

"I am speaking of our affairs, my dear," said Mrs. Tracy, solemnly; "of Millicent's affairs; for, alas! I can scarcely say I have any of my own. Since my poor boy died, seven years ago, I have not cared much what happened,—to myself."

"Poor mamma worries about me more than she ought," said Millicent. "But we did not come to trouble you about that, dear Mary. How nice you look in your pretty muslin! I wonder if I shall ever wear anything pretty again. I feel such an old woman in those hideous caps. Don't I look like a perfect ghost?"

"I think you look more beautiful than ever," said Mary, with a

certain spitefulness. She intended no compliment. It was rather a reproach she meant, as if she had said, "You have no right to be beautiful. Why shouldn't you look a perfect ghost like other people?" It was sharply said, not without a touch of bitterness, though it sounded pleasantly enough; and Millicent shook back her veil a little further, and laid her fingers caressingly upon Mary's hand.

"Ah, it is you who are partial!" she said, while Mary boiled with secret wrath. "But tell me about Thornycroft, and if it is still kept up; and our old Gorgon, you know, and all the people. There was that poor Mr. Thorny, too," said Millicent, with a little laugh; "tell me about them all."

"Mr. Thorny died,—as you must have heard," said Mary, "and it was your doing everybody said; and then poor Miss Thorny gave up. I wonder you like to think of it. It might have been going on like old times but for you."

"Could I help it?" said Millicent, with a little shrug of her shoulders. "If a man is a fool, is it my fault? You must know by this time, Mary, as well as I do, what fools they will make of themselves; but it is too bad to call it our fault."

"I don't know anything about it," said Mary, fiercely, and then there was a pause.

"This is such a lovely place," said Mrs. Tracy; "we have heard so much about it. We used to know your cousin, Mr. Benedict Renton, Miss Westbury,—at one time. I suppose he is still abroad?"

"Yes, he is still abroad."

"What a sad thing for him, with his prospects! It must have upset all your calculations. But the time is up now, is it not?" Mrs. Tracy said, with her most ingratiating smile.

Mary perceived in a moment what was their object, and hoping it might be but a voyage of inquiry, shut up all her avenues of intelligence, and faced the inquisitor with a countenance blank of all meaning;—or so at least she thought. "What time is up?" she said.

"Oh, the time," cried Millicent, breaking in impatiently,—*"the time, you know, for the will. As if you did not know all about it! Oh, you need not be afraid to trust us. Ben Renton was not so careful; he told me everything about it. I must tell you that we saw a great deal of Ben at one time,"* Millicent added, with one of her vain looks. "He was, in short, you know, a little mad;—but you will say that was my fault."

"I have no more to do with my cousin's private affairs than I have with Mr. Rich's," said Mary; "indeed, I wish you would not tell me. My cousin is not a man to like to have his affairs talked about. I would rather not hear any more."

"Miss Westbury is quite right, Millicent," said Mrs. Tracy, "and shows a great deal of delicacy. She is always such a thoughtless child, my dear. She never stops to think what she is going to say."

The harm it has done her, too, if she could only see it! Millicent, my darling, if you would but learn some of Miss Westbury's discretion! But it will be pleasant for you to have your cousins home again, I am sure."

To this artful question Mary gave no answer at all. Indignation began to strengthen her. She sat still, with an air which any well-bred woman knows how to assume when necessary,—an air of polite submission to whatever an unwelcome visitor may choose to say. It neither implies assent nor approbation, but,—it is not worth while to contradict you. Such was the expression on Mary's face.

"Ah, mamma, Mary has not such a warm heart for old friends as I have," said Millicent at last. "I have been raving about coming to see her for weeks back, but she does not care to see me. She is indifferent to her old friends."

"Were we ever old friends?" said Mary. "I don't remember. You were older than I was. I thought you were very pretty, as everybody did, but——"

"But you did not like me. Oh, I am used to that from women," said Millicent with a mocking laugh; and she actually rose to her feet to go away.

And the colour rushed into Mary's face. Used to that from women!—because of her beauty, which transcended theirs! The ordinary reader will think it was a self-evident proposition, but Mary was of a different opinion, being thus directly and personally accused.

"I don't know about women," she said, indignantly; "but I have never had any occasion,—to be jealous of you." This was said with a fierceness which Mary never could have attained to had it been simply true. "I admire you very much," she added with a little vehemence. "I did so at school; but that does not alter the truth. We were never great friends."

"Well, it is kind of you to put me in mind of that," said Millicent. "Mamma, come. You see it is as I told you. We shall find no nice neighbours at Renton. It is best to go away."

The word neighbours made Mary start, and she had not had time to realise that she was about to get rid of them, when the door was suddenly pushed open, and Mrs. Renton's maid appeared with her shawls and her cushions and her knitting. "Mrs. Renton is coming down immediately," said the woman; and on this, to Mary's bewilderment, her visitors sat down again. She was driven to her wits' end. To leave them to encounter poor Mrs. Renton was like bringing the lamb to an interview with the wolf.

"May I ask you to come to the library?" she said, hurriedly. "My aunt is a great invalid, and sees no visitors. Pray forgive me for asking you;—this way," and rushed to the door before them. But the Fates were against poor Mary on that unfortunate day.

"We have made quite a visitation already," said Mrs. Tracy, and

got up again to shake hands. As for Millicent, though she had been so angry, she took Mary's two hands again; and, stooping over her, gave her another kiss. And all these operations took time, and, before they had made any progress towards their departure, Mrs. Renton came in, and received with some astonishment the curtsies and salutations of the unknown guests.

"Pray don't hurry away because I have come. I am always so glad when Mary has her friends to see her," Mrs. Renton said, with the sweetest amiability; "do sit down, pray." The mother and daughter waited for no second invitation. They put themselves on either side of Mrs. Renton, as they had done of Mary; and thus a kind of introduction had to be performed most unwillingly by the victim, who felt that her cause was lost.

"Mrs. Rich!" said the lady of the house, gathering up her wools,— "that must be a relation of the Riches of Richmond. Oh, yes; we know them very well,—that is, they are very good sort of people, I am sure. When my son Frank was at Royalborough, he used to go to see them. All the officers do, I believe; and he made me call. Oh, yes, of course, I understand;—the son who died. Poor thing! Your daughter is a very young widow." This was aside, to Mrs. Tracy, who had already volunteered to arrange the cushions in Mrs. Renton's chair.

"Not much more than a child," said that astute mother; "and left so poorly off, after all! You may suppose, Mrs. Renton, if I had not thought it would be a very good marriage in point of money, I should never have sacrificed my child to the son of a man in the City. I would rather have starved. And then it turned out he had not half what he was supposed to have. People that do those sort of things should be punished," Mrs. Tracy said, with fire in her eye.

"Indeed, that is my opinion," said Mrs. Renton; "but I always thought the Riches were rolling in money." And then she made a little internal reflection that, perhaps, on the whole, Frank had not done so very much amiss.

"So we thought," said Mrs. Tracy, confidentially; "or rather, so I thought, for my poor child is as innocent as a baby. But poor Harry had speculated, I believe, or done something with his money; and his father is as hard,—oh, as hard——! If I could but see justice done to my Millicent, I care for nothing more."

"And, dear me, we had thought they were such liberal kind of people!" said Mrs. Renton. "And your daughter is so very prepossessing," she added, in a lower tone. "Of course they knew all about it,—before——"

"That is just it," said Mrs. Tracy; "the marriage took place abroad, and we were both so ignorant of business, and I fear the settlements were not quite *en règle*. I am so foolish about business; all I trust to is the heart."

"Dear, dear, what a sad thing! But I should always have looked over the settlements," said Mrs. Renton, who knew as much about it as her lap-dog, shaking her head and looking very wise. Millicent had pretended to talk to Mary while this was going on, but principally had employed herself in gazing round the room, noting all its special features. Furnished all anew, in amber satin, it would look very well she thought; and, oh, what a comfort to have such a home, after all the wanderings of her life! And then she wondered what the house was like in Berkeley Square. Poor, dear Ben! what a surprise it would be to him to find that she was established at The Willows! She wondered whether he would be very angry about her marriage, or whether he would think, as so many men did, that a young widow was very interesting; and how long a time it would be before they had made up their quarrels and he was at her feet again! These questions were so full of interest that Mary's taciturn manner did not trouble her. "I dare say she would like to have him herself," Millicent said; and the desire seemed so natural that her respect for Mary was rather increased than otherwise. If she had let such a prize slip through her hands without so much as an attempt to secure it, then Millicent would have thought her contemptible indeed.

At length there came a moment when it seemed expedient that she too should strike in to the conversation with Mrs. Renton. There was an audible pause. Millicent was not so clever as her mother; but in such a crisis as the present she was put upon her mettle. So long as there were only men to deal with there was no need for much exertion. Nature had provided her with the necessary weapons to use against such simpletons,—her eyes, the turn of her head, her smile, a soft modulation of her voice; but with a feminine audience it was a different matter. There, wit was more needful to her than beauty,—mother-wit,—adroitness,—the faculty of adapting herself to her part and her listeners. Mrs. Tracy looked at her with an anxiety which she could not disguise. A statesman looking on while his son makes his first speech in Parliament, could scarcely experience a graver solicitude. As it was, Millicent addressed herself to her mother with the softest of voices. "Mamma," she said, "does it not seem strange to find yourself here, after all Mr. Ben Renton used to tell us? How fond he was of his beautiful home!"

And then came the expected question from his mother,—“Ben? my son Ben? did you meet him abroad? Is it long since you saw him? Dear, dear,—why I am looking for my boy home every day. They are all coming home about,—about—” Here Mrs. Renton caught Mary's warning eye, and paused, but immediately resumed again,—“Why of course everybody knows! Why should not I say what it is about? It was an arrangement of my poor dear husband's. They are coming to read the will. We don't know how we are left,

—none of us, for it was a very odd arrangement ; but I am sure he meant it for the best. We shall be together next month, and I am sure Ben will be charmed to resume his acquaintance with you. What a nice thing you should be in the neighbourhood ! The only thing is, that I am afraid you will find *The Willows* damp."

"But what a pleasure for you to have all your family with you !" said Millicent ; "and oh ! what a delight to your sons to return to you !"

"Yes," said Mrs. Renton. "Of course I shall be very glad to see them. And then, to be sure, shooting will have begun, and they will be able to amuse themselves. I am such an invalid, I tremble at the thought of any exertion." When Mrs. Renton said this, Millicent rose, and declared she knew that she could put one of those cushions more comfortably in the chair.

It was quite late in the afternoon when they left the Manor at last, for Mrs. Renton insisted that they should stay to luncheon. She was distressed beyond measure when she heard of the fly which had been waiting for so long. "It will cost you a fortune," she cried ; "and we could have set you down when we went for our drive."

"We are not very rich," Mrs. Tracy said in reply ; "but to have made acquaintance with you is such a pleasure. And it is not often we indulge ourselves."

Mrs. Renton declared, when they were gone, that it was years since she had seen any one who pleased her so much. "As for the daughter, she is perfectly beautiful !" she cried, in rapture ; "and to think that such a lovely creature should have married Harry Rich !"

"But we don't know anything about Harry Rich," said Mary, who was disposed to be misanthropical ; "perhaps he was a lovely creature too."

"I don't understand what has come to you, Mary," answered her aunt. "Why should you be so disagreeable ? Such a nice, pretty creature ; one would have thought she was just the very companion you want. And your own old schoolfellow, too ! I never like to give in to what people say of girls being jealous of each other, but it really looks more like that than anything else."

"Yes ; I suppose I must be jealous of her," said Mary ; and Mrs. Renton took the admission for irony, and read her a long lecture when they went for their drive. It is hard upon a young woman to be lectured when she is out driving, and can neither run away nor occupy herself with anything that may make a diversion. Poor Mary had to listen to a great many remarks about the evils of envy and self-estimation, and the curious want of sympathy she showed.

"Poor thing !—a widow at such an early age, and badly left, and with such very sweet manners. And the mother such a very judicious person," said Mrs. Renton. "I am so glad they are at *The Willows*. It will be quite a resource to the boys."

Then indeed something very like bitterness rankled in Mary Westbury's heart. Envy, and hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness were all there. Yes, very likely it would be a resource for the boys. In all her own long and tedious fulfilment of their duties, Mary had never once proposed to herself any reward "when the boys came home," and yet, perhaps, there had been in her heart some hope of appreciation,—some idea that they would understand what abnegation of herself it had been. They would know that this long, monotonous stretch of duty,—which was not after all her first natural duty,—was not less, but perhaps more hard than their own wanderings and labour. And now all at once a cloud had fallen over this prospect. One soweth and another reapeth. Mary had laboured and denied herself for their sakes; but it was this stranger who would be the great resource for the boys. And Ben! Mary's heart contracted with a secret, silent pang as she thought of Ben coming defenceless, unprepared, to find the syren who had,—she did not doubt,—bewitched and betrayed him, seated at his very gates. Her last conversation with him rose up before her as clear as if it had but just occurred. Ben, too, had ventured to suggest that she,—that all women,—would be envious of Millicent. Her heart rose with an indignant swell and throb. Was there nothing then in the world better than blue eyes and lips like rose leaves, and the syren's voice and smile? If that was all a man cared for, was he worth thinking of? She had married Henry Rich when Ben was poor; and now that the man whose name she bore had opportunely vanished from her path, she had returned when Ben was about to regain his fortune, to lie in wait for him, with a miserable pretence of old friendship and tender regard for his cousin, who was to be the victim, and scapegoat, and sacrifice for all! Perhaps it was not much wonder that Mary was bitter. And she had all a woman's natural distrust in the man's powers of resistance. It never occurred to her that the syren of his youth might now have no attraction for him. "They are like that," she said to herself, with the true woman's feeling of half-impatient tolerance, and pity, and something like contempt,—not blame, as though he were a free agent. It was not he, but she, upon whom it was natural to lay the blame.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

### THE DOVE.

ABOUT a week after the arrival of the visitors from The Willows, an arrival of a very different kind happened at Renton;—and yet it could not be called an arrival. There had been no further news, and the Manor was still in the same state of pleasant confusion and preparation,—the maids singing and chatting over their work in



the west wing, and a roomful of seamstresses working at the new carpets and curtains for "the boys' rooms,"—when one morning Mary was mysteriously called out from Mrs. Renton's room, where she was reading the newspaper, her usual morning occupation. "It was a lady who wanted to see her," the maid said; and was stolid, and refused all further particulars. "A lady,—any one who has been here lately?" Mary asked, stiffening into sudden offence. It could be nobody but Millicent, she thought, though Millicent had been at the house repeatedly since her first visit, and was already known. "I never saw her before, miss,—not at Renton," was the reply; and Mary, annoyed, went to see for herself who the unknown visitor was. She had been set on edge by the events of the last few days. "Where-soever the carrion is, there will the eagles be gathered together," she said to herself, with a kind of spiteful misery. So long as nothing was going to happen in the family, no mysterious visitors, neither men nor women, came near Renton; and now here was the second in a week! Perhaps some other syren had come to put herself in Ben's way; perhaps somebody who possessed Laurie's secret, whatever that might be. As for Frank, he was a married man, and had his wife to take care of him; and he, heaven be praised! could have no secrets,—at least, none in which Mary could be compelled to interfere.

She went to the drawing-room door discontented, with no comfortable expectation. But when she had opened it, the most unexpected scene burst upon her eyes. The first thing she saw was a Hindoo ayah holding in her arms one of those milk-white, blue-veined children whose delicacy of tint contrasts so strangely with the dusky arms that carry them,—the kind of child of which one says involuntarily that it is an Indian child. Her first glance was at that pearly, blue-eyed creature, and then she turned round with a start and cry of joy upon a lady who stood by smiling.

"Is it Alice?" she cried. The comfort it was to her, the relief and satisfaction and sense of strength it gave her, would be difficult to describe. Mary was not given to enthusiasm, but she clasped her arms about the newcomer with a warmth which brought tears to her eyes. "I thought it was some one disagreeable, and it is you!" she cried in her delight. She had been looking for an enemy, and here was a natural assistant and ally. And then ensued a flutter of explanation and welcome, as was natural. It was Alice who had thus come unaccompanied and unexpected;—or, rather, it was Mrs. Frank Renton, a young matron of six years' standing, with one wistful, bright-eyed, wondering little girl by her side, and the child on the nurse's knee.

"We came to give mamma a surprise," said Alice; "not to keep her anxious till the last moment, thinking everything impossible must have happened to us. I know how she watches every day and thinks. And this was such a good opportunity for coming! We came when



she had not the least expectation of us, and saved her all that. It was Frank's idea," said the young wife with a happy smile.

"And where is Frank?"

"Coming next mail. Yes, that is the worst of it; but, as he said, we could not have everything; and I came with Lady Sinclair, the Governor-General's wife, you know. Think what an honour it is! And she was so kind to us. She has quite taken a fancy to us, which is odd. I don't mean it is odd that they should all be fond of Frank, for everybody is. Don't you think baby is like him? Come and look at baby. I am sure you have not had a good look at him yet. Mamma has done nothing but carry him about in her arms. It is so funny to see my baby in mamma's arms," cried Alice, with a sudden gush of bright tears; "and, oh! so nice! I love him the more for it. She thinks he is rather pale. Well, perhaps he is a little pale. I suppose Indian babies generally are,—and then the journey, you know. Renton is not a bit changed. I stood just now, when you came in, on the very same pattern of the carpet that I stood on when Frank brought me here first; and I was so dreadfully frightened; and then you came and put your arms round my neck!"

"You were such a child," said Mary; and the two kissed each other once more.

"It was so good of you to put your arms round my neck. Not just a regulation kiss, as Frank says. I put myself on the very same square this time to see what you would do."

"Why, you are a child still!" said Mary, looking at her with that curious mixture of amusement and wonder and respect with which an unmarried woman looks upon the matron who is younger than herself. How many experiences Alice had gone through of which the home-dwelling girl knew nothing! And yet she was a child still!

"So mamma says," said Alice. "But, oh! how nice and fresh and bright you look! Is that how dresses are made now? Am I a dreadful fright in my old things? For money does not go so far in India as one thinks; and what with the children and everything, I have had to be very economical. Mamma says I am about fifty years behind other people; and they all laugh so at poor baby's things. But he has got on his new pelisse to-day, and I think he looks very nice. Is grandmamma up yet? Do you think she would like the children to go and see her in her room?"

"I must let her know first," said Mary.

But she lingered, and this babble ran on, which was so pleasant; and the children's hats were taken off, and Alice exhibited little Mary's hair, which was pale gold, of the softest, silkiest kind; but would not *crêper*, nor stand out, as "the fashion" was, to her despair.

"You would not think she had half so much as she has," the mother said; "it is so soft. Look here, how thick it is; but it will not hang as it ought. Should I take her to Truefitt, or somebody?"

Frank thinks it is pretty as it is, but then he did not know what was the fashion; and he is silly,—he likes curls."

"And, by-the-bye, where are your curls?" said Mary.

Alice laughed and shook her head with the pretty movement that these same curls had made habitual to her. "I put them up to come out," she said. "Fancy coming out with the children, and without Frank, with those things bobbing about my shoulders like a baby! I wish you would speak to him about it, Mary. Mamma agrees with me that I ought to put them up when I go out; but he is such an old goose. Don't you think we ought to go to grand-mamma? She may think that it is unnatural of us not to go to her at once."

"It will do by-and-by," said Mary. "You know what an invalid she is. How good the children are, Alice! I am sure she will be delighted with them, after all."

"After all?" cried Alice, amazed. "But you must not think they are always good; you should see mamma with them. Mamma looks as if it was natural to her to have a baby in her arms. Wasn't it good of Frank to make up the plan for me to come over and save her all the anxiety? I did not want to come till he was ready myself. It was all his consideration. And then Lady Sinclair wanted me so much to travel with her. Of course it was more comfortable. And as I am not a great lady myself, nor anybody particular, it was nice to have Lady Sinclair to take me up, you know, for Frank's sake."

"Why, you are quite a little woman of the world!"

"That is what mamma says; but so would you, if you were asked about your people, and all sorts of questions put to you. I always used to feel so ashamed, when the Colonel's wife began to talk to me, that I had not an uncle an earl, or even a baronet. That would have been better than nothing, for Frank's sake. I do think he felt it sometimes, and was angry that his wife was a nobody; but then when Lady Sinclair took me up," Alice said, with a sparkle in her eyes,—“and the Governor-General is baby's godfather,—that made all the difference. It was quite absurd the difference it made."

"And I hope you have kept up your music," said Mary, thinking of Mrs. Renton. But to Alice the question had another meaning, and covered her soft face with a sudden blush.

"I am so glad! Lady Sinclair does not care for music," she cried; "not one bit! She does not know Beethoven from Verdi. It was me she liked, and not my playing. Oh, if you knew how impertinent they used to be! saying I must have been professional, and such cruel things;—not that there would have been any harm in being professional,—but only you know men have such prejudices, and it made Frank furious. But it was me Lady Sinclair liked, though I dare say you are surprised," Alice added, with a laugh of pleasant girlish vanity. Her heart was thrown wide open by the excitement

of the home-coming; all its envelopes of shyness and strangeness having been forgotten for the moment. Except with "mamma" she had never chattered so freely to any one in her life.

"Very much surprised," Mary said, kissing the bright face which had come upon her like a revelation. They had jumped all at once into the tenderest intimacy. Frank's bride had been a timid little stranger the last time she was at Renton, afraid to speak, carrying herself very gingerly among her unknown relations; but she was flushed by the delight of being among her own people this time, and confident of everybody's regard.

"I think really I ought to go to grandmamma now," she added, after that pleasant laugh. And Mary hastened to her godmother to prepare the way. Mrs. Renton had just finished dressing, and was lying on her sofa, to recover from the exertion, sipping her cup of arrowroot. She was in a pale grey dress, which she flattered herself was slight mourning, but had some pretty pink ribbons in her cap, to which that description could scarcely be applied. They were not perhaps very suitable to her widowhood, but then they were very becoming; and when the sun is shining brightly, even an invalid lady upon a sofa is apt to feel an inclination towards such innocent vanities.

"My mistress has taken a biscuit with her arrowroot this morning," said the maid, in a tone of exultation. "I always said as a little bit of company was the thing that would do her most good."

Mrs. Renton gave a soft smile in acknowledgment of this commendation. She was aware that it was good of her to eat that biscuit, and a gentle self-approval filled her heart. "I quite enjoyed it," she said; and Mary had to pause and hear an account of what kind of biscuit it was, and to express her delight at the feat. "And I have something else to tell you, dear godmamma," she said; "if you are quite sure you will not be upset by the surprise. Some one has just arrived,—Alice and the children! She had an opportunity to come by this last mail, with Lady Sinclair, the Governor-General's wife, who has taken a fancy to her. Frank would not let her miss the opportunity. She arrived the day before yesterday, and she is with the children, looking so nice! I am sure you will be delighted to see them. Shall I bring them up here?"

Mary's nervousness betrayed itself in the haste with which she delivered this long explanation, never pausing to take breath. And Mrs. Renton put down her arrowroot and sat upright on the sofa. "Bring them here!—Alice and the children! Good heavens, Mary! are you out of your senses?" said the invalid, "when I have just this moment got out of bed!"

"But she will wait as long as you please," said Mary, anxiously.

"And you know I hate surprises," said Mrs. Renton. "It may be all very well for you robust people who are never ill; but such a

thing upsets my nerves altogether; and nothing is ready, you know; and why did Frank not come with her? But it just shows how dreadful it is to have to do with people who are out of society!" cried Mrs. Renton, putting one foot to the ground. "I suppose I must go and see to things myself."

"Missis will make herself quite ill!" cried the maid, in alarm. "Oh, please, ma'am,—if you would be so good, ma'am,—Dr. Mixton would never forgive me if you went and walked about after you've took your arrowroot."

"Don't worry me, Davison!" cried Mrs. Renton, ready to cry; "as if I had not enough to worry me! Couldn't she write? or keep to her proper time? I don't understand how you can countenance such a thing, Mary! As for walking about, I can't do it. If all the house goes to sixes and sevens,—and there is no place for anybody to sleep in,—I can't help it; I cannot do it. I have my duty to my children to think of, and I am not going to kill myself."

At this moment Alice, who had become impatient, knocked at the door. Nobody conceived that such an invasion was possible, and therefore Davison opened the door, cautious, but unsuspecting, while Mrs. Renton put up her foot again, and lay back, the image of exhaustion, on the sofa. Davison gave a little cry of mingled horror and delight, if such a mixture may be. Alice stood in the doorway with a child in each hand. They were all lightly clad in white summer dresses, the young mother and the two children. Little Laurence tottered forward a step or two, holding by his mother's hand, and Mary held back, gazing, with wistful blue eyes, at the strange scene. Mrs. Renton, as long as she was by herself, was an invalid given up to all sorts of indulgences; but when she was brought face to face with the outside world, she was a lady, and knew how to adopt that gracious rôle. Before Mary Westbury could recover from her astonishment and consternation, the mistress of the house held out her hands to her daughter-in-law. "Ah, Alice, come in," she said; "bring them to me. I am not able, my dear, to go to you."

And in five minutes more, the chatter and the laughter, the tumult of pleasant explanations and questions, and all the talk that belongs to an arrival, was in full course by the side of Mrs. Renton's sofa. As for Alice, it had never occurred to her to be afraid of her mother-in-law. She was afraid of nobody in the present felicitous state of her affairs. She had forgotten altogether how little she had been at Renton, how small her personal knowledge was of the household there. Somehow, through those six years of correspondence, the Manor and the Square had got jumbled together in the mind of Mrs. Frank Renton. Had she come with any doubt of her reception, the chances were that things would not have gone so pleasantly. But she had not the least doubt of her reception. She could not be kept away even so long as

was necessary to get grandmamma's reply. She took it for granted that her husband's mother belonged to her almost as much as her own. Who should go and ask admission for Frank's children into the room their father was born in, but she? And this fearlessness vanquished the invalid, who felt all her tremors of anticipation quieted in a moment. The children did not scream, but only gazed at her in silence, with big wide-open eyes,—and baby was like his father. And Mrs. Renton, though she had been so long accustomed to think of herself first, and watch over her own peace and comfort, was still Frank's mother. After awhile old recollections came over her, and she cried a little over Frank's boy. "I remember when his father was just like him," she began to tell Alice, and ran into a hundred little nursery stories, which roused her heart within her. "I might have talked to her for a hundred years before she would have thought of telling them to me," said Mary, with again an unmarried young woman's admiration, and soft half-envy of the young mother's privileges. Alice drew a low chair to the side of the sofa, and put the baby,—most daring proceeding of all,—on the very couch itself, that grandmamma might give her opinion of his little dimpled arms and legs, and say if she did not think he was stout enough, though perhaps not so fat as an English baby ought to be. "But mamma says she does not care for those very fat babies," Alice said, with eyes intent upon the face of the critic. "And neither do I," Mrs. Renton said with solemnity, holding her grandson's little pink foot in her hand. "If I had done it, poor godmamma would have been quite ill all day," Mary said afterwards, describing the meeting to her mother. And for an hour or two there was nothing to be heard but that soft feminine talk, all full of bits of private history, and interspersed with every kind of digression, which women love. Alice gave them no narrative of her six years' absence; but apropos of everything and nothing, there would come a little chapter out of the heart of it. "It was that time when I was rather ill,—that Frank wrote to you about. He took me up to the hills, and we had to leave little Mary at the station. We went along with the General and his wife, and they were so friendly; and it was he, you remember, who recommended Frank for that appointment he has held ever since. To tell the truth, we had got into debt," said Alice, with a blush; "it was that that made me ill, as much as anything. We were determined not to tell you, but struggle out of it as best we could, and you can't think how glad we were of that appointment. I thought you would all think me such a wretched little creature to have brought Frank nothing, and yet have let him get into debt. It was there I first saw a lady with a chignon. I could not tell what to make of it at first, and Frank thought it hideous; but then it was too big,—it was as big as her head."

"Depend upon it, my dear, it was false hair; they say everybody

wears false hair nowadays," said Mrs. Renton, who was still holding in her hand the baby's little dimpled foot.

"But I don't believe that," said Alice. "I like you in the chignon, Mary; it suits you much better than the other fashion; and what a comfort it must be not to have any curls to do when you are sleepy! Grandmamma, dear, I wish you would tell me what to do with little Mary's hair. It is so soft it will not *crêper*, nor anything. Lady Sinclair's niece's little girl looks to have a perfect bush of hair, and Mary has just as much, but it will not stand out."

"It must be plaited every night before she goes to bed," said Mrs. Renton, "and just damped a little before it is plaited. Have you an English nurse? Of course your ayah must be sent back. And, Alice, I hope you are quite sure about that debt."

"It was all paid, every penny! Don't be afraid. I could never have come home and looked you in the face if it had not been paid. And I have taken such care ever since! Frank is,—too generous, you know. He asks people, and does not think. And then everybody that pleases comes and stays with you. India is such a funny place for that. When we were at Goine Ghurla, the Fentons lived with us for six weeks; they could not get a house to suit them, and we had a larger one than we wanted, and of course they came to us as if it were the most natural thing in the world. It is very nice, but it is rather expensive. Of course we could have gone to them in return had we wanted to go, but we never did. How nice it is to see you in your pink ribbons, grandmamma, after that dreadful widow's cap!"

"My dear, I am only in my own room; it is only something Davison made up for me," said Mrs. Renton, confused. "I never wear colours down-stairs. Indeed, my spirits will never be equal to it again."

"But they are so becoming to you," said Alice. And thus the talk ran on. And the children, awed by the novelty of everything, behaved themselves like little angels, not uttering a cry, nor shedding a tear. When the time of the afternoon drive came, little Mary, inspired by her good genius, made a petition to go in the carriage with grandmamma. And that day the marvellous sight might have been seen of Mrs. Renton with the ayah and the baby seated opposite her, and little Mary, in great state, by her side, perambulating the lanes. Mrs. Renton made the coachman stop when they passed the rector's pony carriage, and explained, "My son Frank's children, just come from India," with such pride as she had scarcely felt since Frank had been the baby. Already these sweet *avant-couriers* of return and restoration had loosened the prison bonds for the invalid in her unconscious selfishness. She forgot all about her medicine, and even her cup of tea, when she went in, and demanded to know instead if her favourite biscuits had been provided for the children.

On the whole, it was pleasanter thus taking thought for others than thinking only of herself.

When they were left alone, Mary and Alice went out together to stray about the lawn and down the favourite haunt of the Rentons,—the path to the river. And they had a great deal of talk and consultation, confidential and serious, which was comforting to both. "Don't you know in the very least how things are to be?" Alice asked, with a certain wistfulness. "I don't care about money, indeed; but, oh, it would be so nice to stay at home!"

"Nobody knows," said Mary; "not even Mr. Ponsonby, I believe. It makes one very anxious when one thinks of it. If poor, dear uncle's mind was touched, as some people think, he may have made some other stipulation. I don't know,—but Renton ought to come to Ben."

"I have heard Frank say often that if the will did not do that, Laurie and he had both agreed to settle it so," said Alice. "Of course they could not take it. But if it is not wrong to say so,—and as poor Mr. Renton is dead I don't think it can be wrong,—I should like if there was some money for us."

"There must be some money for you," said Mary; and thus speaking they moved down the bank, and coming to the beech tree at the corner, which was associated in Mary's mind with so many tangles of the tale, stopped short to contemplate the view. A little to one side from that famous point of vision, a peep could be obtained, through some branches, of a house close by the water's edge,—a little house, with its trees dipping into the stream, lying under the shadow of a high, wooded bank. Mary's mind was full of her special griefs and apprehensions, and she could not keep her eyes from that peaceful little place, which lay full in the afternoon sunshine. "That is The Willows," she said, pointing it out.

"It looks very nice; but what is The Willows?" said Alice. "I never heard Frank speak of it;"—which was her standard of interest for everything within her vision.

"I dare say Frank never remembered it," said Mary; "it is not a place of any consequence; at least, it never was before. But two ladies have come to it now. They are a mother and daughter, and they are both widows."

"Poor things! but that does not sound very important still. Are they nice?" said Alice in her ignorance. And Mary began to regret the suddenness of her confidence.

"The daughter is very beautiful. She was a schoolfellow of mine once," said Mary; "and I'm afraid they are not very nice. If I tell you something, will you never, never say a word to any one,—not even Frank? Oh, it is nothing wrong. I think Ben met her once, and was fond of her. Beauty goes so far, you know, with men. I think he was very fond of her, and she must have deceived him. And



think what it will be to him, poor fellow, if he finds her there when he comes home!"

"But how did she deceive him?" cried Alice. "Oh, tell me! It must be quite a romance."

"I don't care for such romances," said Mary. "He loved her I am sure, and she went away abroad, and must have married somebody else, for she is a widow I told you; and fancy what he will feel when he finds her here!"

"Well, perhaps he might like it," said Alice. "Men are so queer. They are not the least like us. I know by Frank; when something happens that I think he will be in a dreadful way about, he takes it quite calmly; and then for the least little thing, that nobody in their senses would pay the least attention to, he will blaze up! Is Ben nice? Perhaps he will be quite pleased to find her here, to show her he does not care."

"I don't know if you would think him very nice; but to us, you know," said Mary, turning away her head, "he is Ben,—and, of course, there is no more to be said."

"Yes, of course, you are all fond of him," said simple Alice; and they went on, relapsing into other channels of talk. But though she understood so little the full meaning of what she had heard, Alice was such a relief and comfort to Mary as she had not had for years. Even to have said so much as this relieved her; and to nobody else could she have ventured to say even so much. Not to her own mother, who was too energetic, and might have thought it her duty to come into the field, and break a lance with Mrs. Tracy in defence of her nephew; not to Laurie, who might have seen deeper still, and detected certain secrets of Mary's heart which she would not whisper even to herself. But Alice, who was ready to listen, and give her ignorant, shrewd opinion, was a comfort to speak to. Mary was exhilarated and consoled by her walk, as much as her aunt was by the drive, in which the soft pride and sense of property in Frank's babies had warmed her dried-up soul. When the mother and her babies went back to town by the evening train, Mrs. Renton felt herself able to walk almost to the end of the avenue to see them off, a thing she had not been known to do for years; and Mary drove with them to the station, anticipating joyfully the time when "Frank's family" should come back to take possession of the apartments prepared for them. The family ark was settling upon the top of the mount. But a few days more, and the doors would open, and the wanderings be over, and the family fate be known.



EMPLOYMENT OF MILITARY MEN IN CIVIL LIFE,  
AT THE EXPIRATION OF ONE YEAR'S SERVICE.\*

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BY AN EX-NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER.

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ON reading in your magazine for May, 1869, the article on "Army Reform" by Sir Charles Trevelyan, I procured a copy of his pamphlet, "A Standing, or a Popular Army," with the view of making myself better acquainted with the ways and means by which he proposes to create an army that shall be, not only efficient and economical, but attractive to the respectable classes of Englishmen. On that part of Sir Charles's scheme, the title of which I have placed at the head of this paper, I beg permission to make a few remarks. My object is not to criticise his proposal in an unfriendly or captious spirit, but to assist him, and others who are now anxiously studying the military problem, to see it in all its bearings. The credentials I offer, as one who may claim to be heard on this question, are I think such as may be accepted. I am an ex-noncommissioned officer, holding an appointment in the civil service of the Crown; and, therefore, possessed of military experience, as well as of after experience in civil life. With these preliminary remarks I will address myself to my task.

The picture Sir Charles draws of a popular army is a very fascinating one; and I am free to confess that, were I a youth of eighteen, having no experience of military life, and of the influence it exercises in erecting a barrier to advancement in civil life, I should be tempted to try my fortunes under such apparently auspicious conditions. That two of Sir Charles's anticipated results—efficiency and economy—would, if all went smoothly, be realised, can hardly be doubted. But the popularity of such an army, on which, of course, the success of the scheme depends, would, I venture to predict, be but very evanescent. I think the "Private Dragoon," who recently appeared in your pages, singled out an undeniably weak point when he wrote, "Let the best be done that can be done, the blanks in the military lottery will always bear a larger proportion to the prizes than in almost any other calling. This is out of proportion. To tempt him to go through what the barrack will always be, even at its best, the prizes ought to preponderate so largely, that with hardly less exertion than it takes him to make up his mind to

\* As proposed by Sir Charles Trevelyan, K.C.B.

adventure the barrack-room, he should be sure of at least as substantial advantages as would attend energy and perseverance in the civilian world." The reply of Sir Charles to this is, that "while men, and still more, while women have their imaginations filled with military adventure and prestige, 'substantial advantages' equal to those obtainable 'in the civilian world' will not be required to attract young men into the army. Many a poor curate can testify that even the Church is paid partly in honour." But I cannot see that a parallel exists between the profession of the curate and that of the private soldier. The latter, under the new scheme, would enter the army on the speculation of winning a prize, and should he fail,—on the probability of which the odds are very great, taking into consideration the inevitable preponderance of blanks over prizes,—he will pay dearly, I am inclined to think, for the honour of having served in it. On the other hand, the curate (though he, too, may enter his profession on speculation), even if he always remain—a curate, loses nothing, since he still retains an honourable means of earning a livelihood. And this, in the case of the private soldier, on returning to civil life, will, I think I can show, be very doubtful.

Sir Charles is confident that a man, after a year's military training, will return to civil life with his wits sharpened and his body invigorated,—physically and mentally improved,—and altogether a better man than the pure civilian, and better fitted to follow his former occupation than he was previously to his enlistment. And Sir Charles is right in this. From the opportunities I have had of forming an opinion on this point, I am satisfied that military discipline, enforcing as it does almost ineradicable habits of precision, enhances the value of early education or mechanical acquirements, and enables military men, after one or two years' service, to compete and maintain something more than equality with civilians.

But though the soldier should bring these recommendations with him on his return to civil life, there would always be an obstacle to his employment and advancement in the prejudice of the British employer himself. This is a point, the existence of which, I fear, has not yet been thought of by Sir Charles; or, if it has been taken into his consideration, it has been dismissed as a point of no great consequence. To realise, however, the important bearing it has upon this scheme, it is only necessary to give one or two examples.

The British employer, I will premise, is not an individual who will voluntarily put himself to inconvenience; and it is pretty certain that the proposal for a man to serve one year in the army and six in civil life, will, in numberless instances, if carried out, seriously interfere with the even routine of business transactions. There will always be this consideration with the employer, that a man serving his time in civil life, will be, until the expiration of his service, always liable to be called away from his occupation; and can it be doubted that that

will prove a serious objection to his employment? Take, for example, the serious inconvenience the Government would be put to, on a declaration of war, were the majority of artisans, mechanics, &c., employed in the Arsenal, composed of time-service men. Instead of being able to dispense with their civil services, the urgent need for the prompt supply of war material would compel an augmentation rather than a reduction of skilled labourers. Again, one of the inducements Sir Charles suggests for attracting young men into the army is employment in the ordinary civil service, but only,—be it observed,—after the expiration of seven years' military service. It would obviously be injudicious, not to say impracticable, to take a large number of clerks suddenly from the civil service in war time, or indeed at any other time; and, therefore, Sir Charles would apparently avoid that contingency by limiting appointments therein to time-expired men. This also applies to the police force of the country. The question is then,—Will the private employer kindly waive the consideration of his own interests by running the risk of employing time-service men? Why should he run the risk any more than the Government? It may be said it is not unreasonable to expect he should do so, on the ground that he has declaimed loudly against the expenses of keeping up a standing army; and has clamoured to be relieved from some portion of the heavy tax he is called upon to pay for it. But it is not the employer alone who helps to maintain a standing army. The civil employé also contributes his quota for the same purpose. Whilst, then, the former lies under no greater obligation in this matter than the latter, he will not, I am persuaded, however gratified he may feel at the lighter demand made on his pocket, put himself to inconvenience to oblige the State.

I gather from the pamphlet that Sir Charles, in considering this part of his scheme, has been led to think that because the French soldier, after a few years' service, has no difficulty in finding civil employment, and following his original occupation, that, therefore, under the condition of short service in the British army, a man will be placed in the same favourable position. But it must be borne in mind that the *modus operandi* for obtaining recruits for the French army is diametrically opposite to that in vogue for recruiting the British army. The former is based on conscription, the latter on voluntarism. And conscription has taught the French employer what voluntarism is not calculated to teach the British employer,—sympathy for the man who leaves his home and occupation to join the army; and this sympathy has,—in this instance, at least,—led him to believe that it is his duty to do unto others as he would that they should do unto him. Thus the French employer, although he knows he is liable to suffer inconvenience by the sudden outbreak of war, is prepared to make some self-sacrifice, and employs the returned soldier without hesitation. I may possibly be accused of

maligning a large class of my countrymen, by implying a lack of patriotism in imputing to them an unwillingness to make any self-sacrifice to uphold the national honour. But I confidently appeal to the evidence of the past, and would ask, Can it be shown that, hitherto, the discharged soldier has been received with open arms by British employers? Can the returned soldier step into the counting-houses and warehouses of the latter in the happy assurance that he has only to produce the parchment certificate of his discharge, to meet with immediate employment? The test of true patriotism does not consist merely in subscribing to a Patriotic Fund at a time when the bullet and disease are making havoc amongst the ranks of the army, and filling the land with helpless widows and orphans; but, when no extraordinary circumstances act as an incentive to call their charity into action, in enabling the man who has given the best years of his life to the service of his country, to earn an honest living, free from that anxiety as to the means by which he shall obtain a future subsistence, with which he is but too frequently attended on returning to civil life. What was it but the hopeless, and almost destitute condition, in which he found hundreds of discharged soldiers wandering about the streets of the metropolis, and meeting with nothing but ruthless elbows and pitiless cold-shoulders from British employers, that induced the gallant Captain Walter to organise the Corps of Commissionaires? Again, in the Session of 1868,—“Times,” 30th June,—Sir C. Russell brought the subject of “men discharged from the army” before the House of Commons, and in “moving that it was expedient to employ in Government situations non-commissioned officers and privates discharged from the army with good characters,” referred in proof of the necessity of finding employment for such men, to the report of the Army and Navy Pensioner Employment Society. I give the following extracts therefrom:—

“In the year 1855, in consequence of the war with Russia, men of all ages, in large numbers, were daily discharged from the service, disabled by wounds, or from broken health and other causes unfitted for military duty. Those men experienced the greatest difficulty, almost amounting to impossibility, in obtaining any employment to enable them to support themselves and families. . . . In cases of limited service, the pension awarded was generally from 6*d.* to 8*d.* per diem, and seldom rose to 1*s.* The discharged soldier became, in consequence, idle and half-destitute, and rapidly lost his military instincts and habits of discipline and order. . . . From the reconstruction of the Society in 1859, to the present date, nearly 4,766 pensioners of good character have been registered, and 2,981 provided with employment. The situations vary in value from £30 to £100 or more per annum; the men are recommended only for such places as their antecedents qualify them for, and it is gratifying to the council to be able to state that, from the favourable reports

received, both from employers and the pensioners themselves, the operations of the Society continue to give general satisfaction. . . . The council feel sure that officers in her Majesty's service cannot be aware of the difficulties which 'pensioners' meet with on re-entering civil life; and in how many instances some of the best men are, with their families, in a short period after their discharge, reduced to a state bordering on destitution."

Now, here is direct evidence testifying to the fact that, although discharged soldiers have been found, on trial, to make useful and trustworthy servants, their employment was not due to spontaneous sympathy on the part of employers, but was effected through the generous exertions of a few humane gentlemen. I can also bear witness to this difficulty in obtaining employment, from personal experience.

It may fairly be assumed, then, that as Sir C. Russell brought forward his motion in 1868, the prospects of the soldier obtaining employment on returning to civil life, are not more favourable than they were in 1855, and that the patriotism of employers is about as self-sacrificing now as then. This indifference to the welfare of the discharged soldier is not, however, confined to employers; the Government has been equally indifferent as to the fate of its returned soldiers. If this were not the case, Sir C. Russell would scarcely have deemed it necessary to bring the subject before the House of Commons. 'Tis true that, since the Crimean war, discharged soldiers have been employed in Government situations, but only to an extent disproportionately small to the numbers yearly leaving the army, whilst those who have been employed as clerks have been remunerated at the lowest possible rate. But whatever may have been the conduct of the Government in time past, and whatever it may be in the future, it is evident that the British employer holds the key of the position in his own hands; and it is hardly doubtful that his patriotism is not to be relied upon.

But, again, this question has another aspect, and one which certainly affords the employer a feasible excuse for hesitating to employ time-service men. Take it for granted the employer will run the risk of engaging them, there will still be the question of the degree of experience to be considered. The commercial machinery is regulated by a progressive system of learning. A man of mature age does not find employment in merchants' and tradesmen's firms unless he is thoroughly experienced in his trade or calling, and this experience can only be gained by early induction. There are many trades and occupations which require a set number of years—from five to seven—in which to attain a perfect knowledge. It would all depend then on the age at which men of these classes enlisted as to whether they would possess sufficient experience to ensure their employment as skilled labourers.

The fact is, that it would be absolutely necessary to place a curb on the military enthusiasm of artisans, mechanics, clerks, mercantile assistants, and such like persons, by refusing to accept their services unless they could prove they had gained such proficiency in their respective callings as would enable them to resume them at no disadvantage to themselves. It is not difficult to foresee the unhappy plight in which a man would be placed on returning to civil life, with his military aspirations damped by disappointment, and no opening in the mercantile world to compensate him for it.

But what advantage would the man of experience have over the man of inexperience? Is it at all probable that the employer, knowing the continuous services of the soldier could not be relied on, would afford him the same opportunities of advancing in his profession as the stationary or non-military man? Or, if it were probable, would the time-service man, already disappointed in not gaining a military prize, contemplate, with anything like satisfaction, the chance of his having to resign the prosperous position in which he might be placed for one in which the prizes to be gained must unavoidably always partake of the nature of a lottery? But what would be the practical effect of short service, as proposed by Sir Charles Trevelyan? "We want," he says, "in order to counter-balance the 800,000 troops the French Emperor can bring into action, at least an army of 400,000 men." It follows, then, that there would be that number liable for seven years to be called upon at any moment to forsake their civil occupations—whether prospering in them or not—and enter upon active military service. What would this be but conscription? and conscription, too, of an aggravated character, since it would fall upon the working classes only. Now, I would ask, why should the working classes only be called upon to run the risk of sacrificing seven years of civil prospects? Nay, not seven years only, but mayhap the prospects of a lifetime! It is possible that the man, whose "imagination is filled with military adventure and prestige," may not foresee the real disadvantages of short service; but a "sad awakening" would assuredly follow experience, and with that awakening would also follow the unpopularity of the army, more intense, perhaps, than it is at present.

That we must have a larger army as a counterpoise to the immense military hosts of continental powers, is now beyond dispute; but I can see only two ways of obtaining it—by a standing army or conscription.

J. K.

## THE DOWAGER COUNTESS.

### PART I.

#### I.

It was very generally said of the Dowager Countess of Dangerfield that she was no longer the woman she had been. This did not mean simply that her youth and beauty had departed; because, as a matter of fact, her ladyship had not been at all young or even tolerably good-looking for many a day. But of late her friends agreed that she was much "shaken,"—some preferring the term "broken." It was true enough, they conceded, that she was still erect as a grenadier, almost as tall, quite as fierce and formidable of presence; and, dressed in her favourite flame-coloured damask gown, its facings, robings, and white satin petticoat thickly embroidered with gold braid,—her head freshly curled and powdered and fully crowned with jewels, flowers, and feathers,—her eyebrows heavily blackened, and a thick coat of white and red paint screening her face and filling up the many crevices and creases in its surface,—she looked, altogether, much as she had looked any time during a score or more of years; but, so observers pronounced, she was manifestly changed nevertheless. Her voice,—still a bass organ of power and volume,—was less securely under her command than of old; less firm and prompt in its delivery, with an inclination to falter and flatten about certain of its notes. Her speech had lost much of the acrid vehemence which had once distinguished it. She had formerly indeed been noted for a peculiar savageness of sentiment, and for the exceeding strength of the language in which she had been wont to give this expression. To say simply that she swore would not adequately convey an idea of her special method of enunciation, because in the Countess's day ladies of quality were accustomed to season their conversation more or less abundantly with oaths. But she swore greatly in excess of the privileges of fashion,—as constantly and as terribly, sooth to say, as "our army in Flanders" had lately been in the habit of swearing. Her diction was now found to be restrained within tolerably decorous limits, however, and her manner had become almost staid in comparison with the turbulence that had once characterised it. She had even been known,—not to smile certainly, but to relax for a moment the habitual rigour of her frown, and to ease her ordinarily severe rule over her facial muscles. The result had been somewhat grim and forbidding, considered in relation to amiability of aspect as it is



generally understood, but yet had about it a certain quality that was of value if only because of its newness. Any variation in Lady Dangerfield's expression of countenance could hardly have been for the worse; and a look that was removed but a very little from the malign and the terrible, had in her case the preciousness as of startling novelty.

But this change in the Dowager Countess being clear, that it was rather the achievement of circumstances she had been unable to control, than the result of voluntary action of her own in the matter, was not less obvious. She had the air of one who had fought against alteration, and had ultimately been constrained to succumb to it. She was at times nervous and restless,—deficient in her old prompt presence of mind and steady self-command. She wore an abstracted, now and then, almost a scared, bewildered look. Much of this might perhaps fairly have been attributed to her advanced age; for she was not merely an old woman,—she was a very old woman. Yet people resolutely declined to accept that plausible explanation of the change in her ladyship. They seemed to regard her as quite impervious to the attacks of time. They maintained that she was as well as she had ever been; and certainly she had hardly known a day's illness in the whole course of her life. They derided the notion of her yielding to age, and, pointing to her gaunt frame and muscular and somewhat masculine proportions, demanded if she looked like a woman who was weakening under the weight of her years? Undoubtedly she did not look such a woman. Still, as the Rev. Mr. Bramston had then quite recently been singing—

“All sublunary things of death partake;  
What alteration does a century make!  
Kings and comedians all are mortal found,  
Cæsar and Pinkethman are underground.  
What's not destroyed by Time's devouring hand?  
Where's Troy, and where's the May-pole in the Strand?”

No one presumed to think, and probably no one felt so well disposed towards her as to hope, that Lady Dangerfield would prove more immortal than her neighbours.

How then was the change to be accounted for, and from when did it date? It was not easy to say. But close inspectors were frequently alleging that the Countess had never been herself, as they phrased it, since one fine evening when her chariot had been stopped in Piccadilly, and she had been bidden by a masked and mounted highwayman to stand and deliver. She had, it was said, met the onset of the outrage with her constitutional fortitude,—had even offered some show of resistance; but the pressure of the cold muzzle of a horse-pistol upon her ladyship's hollow and rouged right cheek had convinced her of the imperative necessity of yielding to the malefactor's demand, and she had straightway abandoned to him her



jewels, purse, and watch. Her grand-daughter, Lady Barbara Dangerfield, had sat beside her in the carriage, and had fainted incontinently upon the appearance of the robber. He had snatched from her the fashionable complication of velvet, lace, and flowers, called a "pompon," which she wore to decorate her head; but otherwise he had left the young lady unmolested, and had ridden off, it was stated, laughing aloud and displaying much levity of manner, before any attempt could be made to hinder his departure. Probably the show of alacrity on the part of passers-by in the way of arresting so daring a felon was of an inconsiderable kind,—until he was fairly out of sight, and danger from his pistols had entirely ceased. Then no doubt desire for his capture and anxiety to grapple with him were loudly expressed, and of a particularly urgent character.

Naturally this disaster had been a shock to the Dowager Countess. Not that the loss of property could have greatly grieved her; for her wealth was almost without bounds, and she could fairly have afforded, if that was the only question involved, to be plundered by footpads once a week, or even oftener. And indeed, in the instance under mention, her ladyship, as it happened, really incurred no loss; for on the morning after the robbery there was left at her mansion, in St. James's Square, a sealed packet containing every item of the valuables of which she had been dispossessed but a few hours previously. No explanation was given of the motives that had induced this strange proceeding. It was left for conjecture to determine as to whether sudden contrition had moved the thief to this seemingly step, or whether some unknown friend of her ladyship's, by a subtle course of action, had compelled restitution of the plunder. The thing was indeed mysterious and inexplicable. One article only was not restored; but that was of but trifling value. It was the "pompon" snatched by the highwayman from the head of the youthful Lady Barbara when she fainted.

The fact remained, however, that a lady of very exalted position had been subjected to grave indignity. But was this enough to account for the change the world had noted in the Dowager Countess? She had been credited with the possession of most manly intrepidity. It had been said of her that she feared simply nothing and no one. She came of the Brabazon family, long famed for the audacity, almost the ferocity, of its scions of either sex. It was not readily to be believed that a daughter of that truculent and combative house would be greatly moved, much less would be vitally altered, by the poor fact that the iron ring of a pistol-barrel had chilled for a moment her august countenance, even though the other end of the weapon had been grasped by the unscrupulous hand of a highwayman. The really great,—and who was really great if the Dowager Countess of Dangerfield was not?—were hardly to be permanently affected by such small matters. Besides, outrages of this kind, to the disgrace of the

authorities, had become common at this time. A long series of disastrous campaigns had been followed by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and a peace which, notwithstanding the fire-works and rejoicings and re-animation of trade it brought with it, many classes averred to be worse than a state of war; for the country was now flooded with disbanded soldiers and sailors, who from lack of occupation turned highwaymen and footpads in alarming numbers. Society had come to be afraid of stirring out after dark. So many persons of distinction had been robbed in the streets that a reward of one hundred pounds was offered in the "London Gazette" for the apprehension of any robber. Lady Albemarle, the sister of the Duke of Richmond, had been plundered of her watch and purse by nine assailants, at dusk, in so public a thoroughfare as Great Russell Street; and Mr. Horace Walpole, while sitting in his chariot in Hyde Park, had been attacked and robbed by highwaymen, narrowly escaping with his life,—a pistol-shot had even scarified his distinguished jaw-bone! It was quite certain that the Dowager Countess had suffered in very excellent company. Her case, however to be deplored, was by no means exceptional. Could it be regarded, then, as a satisfactory explanation of the change in her ladyship?

Let us record that in other respects there were signal peculiarities marking the period. Society is subject every now and then to a kind of nervous disorder or hysterical seizure. The concrete mass does not escape the liabilities of the abstract atom. The community reflects indeed, sometimes as in a magnifying mirror, the diagnostics of the individual.

Now we all know, without needing to fee a physician for the information, that there are many infirmities afflicting human nature which originate in, or are greatly attributable to, the follies and the errors of the sufferer. An irregular course of life, a persistent disregard of hygienic considerations, results in this or that form of malady. We make ourselves ill, in point of fact, of our own accord. We set down certain rows of figures under each other, and then are startled because when we come to add them up they amount to such and such a total. "You seek me," the doctor would tell us, if he could afford to be frank, "because you have tampered with your constitutions, trifled with your stomachs, impaired your digestions, upset your nervous systems. Patients, heal yourselves! Alter your lives and mend your ways!"

A century back from now,—more, a hundred and twenty years ago, let us say,—society had been behaving very dreadfully indeed. It had proceeded from excess to excess; it had carried on a protracted career of dissoluteness; its frailties and wantonness knew no bounds. It was in a state of fever; its nervous organisation was morbidly exacerbated; its reason was menaced; and indeed it verged upon delirium. It was in so highly wrought a condition, while it was yet

so enervated and exhausted, that it was ready to scream at the upholding of a finger, to swoon at the explosion of a cracker.

Moreover, while society was thus, as it were, open at every pore, and peculiarly receptive of the slightest influences, there was something strange in the air, "breathing contagion." There had been no winter; that is to say, no frost, no cold winds even. For eight months the weather had been unnaturally hot. Honeysuckles had flowered in December, and the nectarine trees were in bloom at Christmas. The world was at a loss to account for the curious clemency of the season. Mr. Walpole retreated to Strawberry Hill in February, "for air:" he could not breathe in town. People whispered to each other that Sir Isaac Newton had foretold a great change in the English climate as likely to occur about the middle of the eighteenth century, and had expressed a wish that he could live to see it. It was a pre-scientific epoch, so that there was no accounting for the weather by any allusions to the Gulf Stream. "The pleasant Horace," as Miss Hannah More was by-and-by to designate him,—the good lady, of course, did not hear all Mr. Walpole said, and was without our opportunity of reading all he wrote,—was content with the fanciful explanation that "Jupiter had jogged the earth three degrees nearer to the sun." Meanwhile a troubled mob averred that there had appeared in the heavens "a bloody cloud,"—portentous of all kinds of dire catastrophes.—It was probably the Aurora Borealis, but there was a general disposition to consider it something more awfully phenomenal.—Then, early in the year, the country had been shaken by a storm unprecedented in point of violence, and attended by grave calamities. In the western counties, where it had chiefly raged, the prolonged tempest of wind, hail, and rain had overwhelmed the inhabitants with fear and consternation, and devastated property to an alarming extent. In the world of politics, the peace notwithstanding, a feeling of uneasiness was manifest, the more serious perhaps because of its vagueness and the absence of any palpable reason for it. A sort of undercurrent of alarm touching the designs of the Pretender was discernible, however: although the rising of '45 had been ruthlessly quelled, and the rebel lords had duly suffered on Tower Hill. Gossips rumoured that the Young Chevalier had even been seen in London. This could hardly have been true, though, like a good many other falsehoods, it was perhaps only anticipatory of fact—for King James's grandson was certainly to be present in town a little later. Yet, in spite of all these agitating causes,—or, it may be, in part, because of them,—society continued to whirl in a desperate vortex of dissipation. Gambling had become an all-dominant mania. Gentlemen of fashion went hunting even with dice in their pockets, so that in the event of "a check," or the hounds not finding, they might "throw a main" by the covert side, to while away the time, and, so to say, keep the game alive. Nor were the gentler sex less

absorbed by passion for play. They were even apt, now and then, to risk upon the turn of a card, or the cast of the die, other matters, that should have been infinitely more valued by them than their money: as Hogarth's famous picture, "*The Lady's Last Stake*," with its portrait of Miss Salisbury, afterwards Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Piozzi, so forcibly testifies. "The quality," male and female, in ecstasies swarms, filled *ridottos* and masquerades at which the wildest license prevailed, and the strangest fashions in dress and undress found favour. It had almost become the vogue at these festal assemblies to reverse ordinary rules of attire—to mask the face and uncover the rest of the body. Flesh-coloured silk was in great demand, and abandonment of drapery was general. The satiric journals advertised on sale or hire, "naked dresses in imitation of the skin." In short, it had come to this: in order to rise to the height of fashion, it was only necessary to sink to the depths of impropriety.

No wonder Methodism began to lift up its voice, denouncing the iniquity of the period, while various prophets foretold the coming of much solemn trial and trouble upon the land by reason of its iniquity. But, as yet, the preachers and seers had wrought little amendment. The quality continued their desperate course,—apparently little distressed at their situation,—shattered somewhat in regard to nervous system, but scarcely meditating reform of a plenary kind as to mode of life.

It is probable that the change in the Dowager Countess of Dangerfield, which her friends had been so careful to note, was attributable rather to the general influences at work around her, taken in combination, than to any one of these considered separately and distinct from its fellow signs of the times. And the fact that she was not the woman she had been, although admitted, must not be strained to signify too much. It is to be understood that however "shaken," or even "broken," her ladyship still held her own in the realms of fashion: was ever to be seen in the van of the follies and dissipations of her time.

## II.

The Dowager Countess was holding high revel, giving a grand "rout" at her town mansion in St. James's Square. The night was turned into day. The neighbourhood was all a-glow with the quivering flames of links, the gleam of lanterns, the mellow light of oil-lamps. A splendid crowd was gathering thither, choking the way. There was a wonderful tangle of vehicles; the hubbub was tremendous; the confusion seemed inextricable. Coachmen lashed and swore; link-boys yelled shrilly; horses' hoofs clanged and clattered; wheels rumbled and grated and locked; running footmen, bearing wax flambeaux, pushed and struggled to clear a path for their

masters; chair-porters squabbled and fought. From afar could be heard the thundering over the boulder-paved roadways of the approaching coaches, rich in crusted gilt decorations and finely coloured panels, yet swinging and rocking so terribly on their course that there seemed danger every moment of the drivers being hurled from the fringed and tasselled hammercloths, and of the occupants within being shaken to pieces by the exceeding violence of their transit. Sedans, in long lines, were to be seen advancing from all quarters, bounding elastically up and down as they came, with the practised half-running, half-walking gait of their porters, and centring in an inconvenient cluster at Lady Dangerfield's door. As the night advanced the endless stream of guests seemed to strengthen and thicken more and more.

There had been a grand dinner party at three o'clock in the afternoon: the fare of a substantial kind enough,—somewhat coarse, perhaps, from a modern point of view. But people of quality were then content to regale themselves with beefsteaks, rabbit and onions, collared pig, pickled salmon, venison pasty, apple pie, orange butter and Dutch cheese, washed down with strong ale, punch, and usquebaugh: the feast being crowned with choicer liquors, such as tokay, champagne, burgundy, and Florence wine. It was hardly surprising that upon many of the faces of the Countess's guests there was perceptible a roseate flush of overfeeding, that rendered rouge quite a superfluous adornment. Nevertheless, fucus, in thick coats, had been plastered upon the cheeks of most of the company present.

The entrance-hall and staircase were lined with flowers and shrubs, and lighted with coloured lamps. It was quite "a baby-Vauxhall," every one declared. In the centre of the vestibule leading to the grand withdrawing-room stood large alabaster vases, with wax candles burning within,—“a mighty pretty effect,” it was universally agreed. The spacious saloons were hung with Indian painted taffeta; stacks of valuable china, ranged on Japan cabinets, filled the corners of the rooms. Central chandeliers of bronze and cut-glass were suspended from the painted ceilings, and convex mirrors on the walls reflected and multiplied the light of the candles in the sconces. Still, it must be admitted, the general scheme of illumination was not of a very ample kind. In those days, gas, and argand, and sun-burners, and moderator lamps, and other corresponding contrivances were not; and people perforce were content, even on the grandest occasions, with a dimness and gloom that would now be deemed very intolerable indeed. But if the background was somewhat lustreless, the foreground figures were sufficiently splendid. Sumptuousness of apparel was the vogue. The crow rules our modern method of costume; but the peacock then prevailed. And Lady Dangerfield's guests were as radiant and magnificent as white and scarlet paint, diamonds, feathers, lace, gold and silver embroidery,

velvets, silks, and satins, and all the hues of the rainbow, could make them.

"Gracious powers, was there ever such a crush!" exclaimed one lady of quality to another. "My new silk sack has been nearly torn from my shoulders, and my lace is all tatters. These dreadful hoops!"

"They're the mode, my dear, and one may as well be in one's coffin as out of the fashion. We're all like blown bladders to-day; next month I don't doubt we shall all be stalking about as thin as thread papers."

For the moment square or oblong hoops were the only wear, and the caricaturists of the period,—who had their hands very full of subjects,—ventured to compare the ladies who followed the fashion to donkeys bearing panniers. Indeed, the wicker protuberances which women then wore on either side were of amazing size, and fully deserved the scoffs and censures of the satirists. The men also delighted in amplitude of dress, and the skirts of their coats were lined with buckram or stiffened with whalebone, so as to project from the figure in graceless lines enough. By way of curious contrast to this fashion, very small wigs, fitting closely to the head, were the mode, and the ladies' caps were of flat form, and extremely diminutive size. The fashionable hair-powder was of a bluish-grey colour.

"It's a mercy I'm here alive," quoth Lady Betty Laxford, laughing and panting. She was a florid, exuberant beauty of the Bacchante type, lavish in display of neck. "My louts of chairmen turned me topsy-turvy, and I 'saw London,' as the children say when you hold them head downwards. I thought I should never come right again, I was so bundled up in my coats, and frightened out of my senses with the crash of broken glass. People couldn't even see how I was blushing, and I hardly know now whether I'm on my head or my heels. I really thought the end of the world was come. The oddest feeling, my dear! I screamed and laughed and cried and fainted, all at once. That is, I should have fainted, only I felt I was in a frightful pickle, and I didn't know who might be looking at me. It's no good fainting when you're hoops are over your head, you know. I boxed one rude fellow's ears for laughing, and then I gained the door, with the loss of my fan and half my ribbons. Where's the dear Countess? What a world of company! And where are the card-tables? What would I give for a glass of negus, or a taste of ratifia!"

Her ladyship gathered together her tumbled train of rose-coloured paduasoy, embroidered with festoons of vine-leaves and corn-flowers, and pushed her way through the thronged rooms.

"Odslife! what a crowd," she cried. "I shall be stripped of my clothes, and go home like a naked creature, I'm sure I shall. Plague on the men, how they keep pegging down one's sack with their ugly

heels! I'd better have come dressed like Mother Eve at first. Harry Brabazon, you good soul, give me an arm and take me to a safe corner."

"I had the pleasure of seeing your ladyship at the door, and the pain of being unable to render any assistance. I was so hemmed in by the crowd. I trust your ladyship was not hurt?"

"Is my ladyship a pancake, that I'm to be turned over like that and not hurt, sir? You were looking on, were you? You're a wretch to tell me of it! You couldn't help me for grinning, I'll be bound. And you're laughing at me now in your sleeve, you know you are. As I'm a person, I shall never give over blushing for this night's mishap!"

The gentleman addressed as Harry Brabazon wore the uniform,—scarlet, with blue facings corded with gold,—of a captain in the King's Guards. He carried under his arm a large military cocked hat called a Kevenhuller, edged with gold lace, and decorated with the black Hanoverian cockade. He was of elegant figure and bearing, with a handsome face,—“a black man,” as complexions were then accounted, the meaning being, not that he was a negro, but that his skin was of a dark hue,—a trifle worn, perhaps, by late hours and loose living: for he followed the reckless fashions of his time. A younger son, related to the family of the Dowager Countess of Dangerfield, he was said to have in great part exhausted his small patrimony at the hazard-table. At the same time he was reputed to be a gallant officer, and to have served with distinction under his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, and other commanders.

"I won't detain you longer, Captain," Lady Betty said presently. "I'm better now. I've got my breath again,—almost. And I know you're mad to be off dancing with that pretty Bab Dangerfield."

"Can Lady Betty imagine——"

"Yes. Lady Betty knows all about it. I've been turned up like an hour-glass, but things are shaking gradually into their right places again, and I'm not so giddy as you think me, perhaps. You're playing a dangerous game, Captain Brabazon. You think you can carry off Bab from under the very eyes of that she-dragon of an old countess. You'll find it none so easy, let me tell you. I wouldn't mind helping you if I could, and if I dared. Bless the man, how his great black eyes gleam at me! Only gratitude, I suppose, though it looks for all the world like love. Let go my hand, Harry. She's too good for you, sir. You've modesty enough to know that, I suppose, if you've any modesty at all. I don't believe men even know what the word means. We're all too good for you, that's the fact. And Bab's the sweetest, dearest, little body living. To think of her being handed over to the tender mercies of a great swaggering captain of the guards! Much worse couldn't happen to her if the town were to be taken and sacked by the Pretender and the French. There,



go! I'll find my way to the card-room by myself. One last word,—  
'Ware the Countess!"

"She hates me, I know."

"Why shouldn't she? Ain't you her relation? Do you expect her to love you? Do you think you're the sort of creature to be loved by her,—or by any one?"

"Well, I don't know, Lady Betty; a man can but try his luck, you see."

"Luck, indeed! Do you think love's a mere gambling matter?"

"Well,—one stakes one's heart, you know. Can one venture more? I would if I could,—if I'd anything more or better to venture."

"Your heart! Are you sure you've got such a thing about you? A mere lump of pumice-stone, that can feel nothing and hold nothing. And you think yourself worthy of Bab Dangerfield!"

"I never said that, Lady Betty. One may love, I suppose, and yet be very unworthy to possess that one loves. My hopes have hardly dared to mount so high yet. I dare say I'm all you say I am, Lady Betty. Yet if I can win my cousin Bab, be sure I will. For deserving her, that's quite another matter. But I'm fond of my own way,—and I've a knack of getting it, at odd times; and I've a pretty stout arm——"

"None of your desperado airs with me, sir. You can break a lamp, bully a constable, or bam a justice with any blood in the liberties of Westminster, I don't doubt. But do you think you can clear a path to a woman's heart by means of ever so stout an arm? Is a girl of spirit to yield to mere brute force? Do you take Bab for one of those wretched Scotch folks you cut the throats of after Culloden? Don't scowl so, Harry. You don't know how it tempts one to tease you. I like you,—there. Can I say anything prettier than that? And,—I'll get the old Countess down to cards presently. Will that do? I really believe I'm an angel by rights,—only somehow my wings got shaken off when my chair upset, and left me mortal after all."

### III.

Youthful little Lady Barbara Dangerfield, in her white damask gown, a blush-rose in her tucker, and a black velvet ribbon secured by a diamond buckle round her pearly, slender neck, certainly looked a very pretty, dainty creature indeed. Mr. Reynolds would have taken real delight in limning her ladyship's sweet face, and would have done as much in his very best manner at the moderate charge of some twelve guineas or so; for, at the time of which we are writing, England's greatest painter was little known or prized by the London world of fashion. Lady Barbara had large, steady, deep blue eyes, coral-red lips of most perfect form, and a pleasant, unconscious

sauciness about the trim outline of her nose and chin. Her auburn hair fell in profuse coils upon her satin shoulders, though its golden-russet glories of hue were cruelly masked by the pomatum and powder with which it was caked. Her tightly-laced, unyielding, cylindrical corset hindered somewhat the free movement of her lithe figure, cramping too its undulating graces of contour. Yet youth and beauty and natural charm fought a good fight against the restrictions and compulsions of fashion in attire, and, upon the whole, held their own very thoroughly. Her animation fairly kindled by the excitement of her first ball, her glances lit up and her cheeks flushed by the witcheries of the music and the dance, she was, if not the most striking or commanding, without doubt the prettiest woman beneath her grandmamma's roof on the night of the grand rout.

"I'm not to dance with you, Harry. I'm not to speak to you," said Lady Barbara, with a frightened look, as Captain Brabazon approached her.

"I know I'm a dreadful ogre," said the Captain. "Yet you don't think so very ill of me, do you, Bab?"

"Indeed not,—but my grandmother——"

"My great aunt hates me like the,—well, like poison. I don't suppose she does hate the other person I was going to mention so very much after all. Yet I must speak to thee, Bab."

"Indeed Harry——"

"The Countess has only forbidden your speaking to me. She can't help my speaking to you, can she? You need not answer, you know, Bab, unless you like; and then you can do it with your eyes. That won't be disobeying orders, will it, Bab? You're not forbidden to look at me, are you? And your looks say more than the tongues of all the rest of the people in the room put together, to my thinking, and talk a prettier language,—not that that's saying so much after all."

"You know, Harry, that it is not my wish that we should be other than friends."

"We are friends, Bab, and we will be friends,—that at least, though all the grandmothers in the world say us nay. How pretty you look, my child, to night! Quite good to eat, I protest. But that is an ogre's speech." And the Captain laughs, showing his white teeth, and looking a very happy, and fond and good-natured sort of ogre.

"You'll dance a minuet with me?" he asked.

"I should like to," says Bab simply, "but I dare not."

"Presently, I mean. When her ladyship's at cards. She'll forget everything, even you, Bab, when she's fairly snared by the red and black pips. May she hold every king in the pack! She's never tired of playing while the luck's on her side. But that's a common case."

"I shall be seen talking to you,—and how I shall be scolded!"

Bab's childish air of distress, as she glanced timorously about her, was very charming.

"Step into the balcony,—there's no one looking."

They entered a sort of artificial bower, veiled with gauze curtains, and lined with shrubs and flowers, and dimly lit with small lamps in coloured glasses.

"The ball-room was terribly hot," said Bab presently, reconciling herself to what she knew would be judged as highly improper and disobedient by the Dowager Countess. "I vow it's quite cool and pleasant here. What's that? Lightning?" She gave a little scream.

"Don't be frightened, Bab. It won't hurt you. What could hurt you? Sweet, good little soul that you are."

"Will there be a storm, do you think, Harry?"

"Very likely. It's been strangely hot and heavy all day long."

"I'm a dreadful coward when there's a storm,—especially when I'm alone."

"Then I promise you I won't leave your side for a single moment until it's all over." The Captain spoke with the air of being perfectly unselfish in the matter.

"How kind you are to me, cousin."

"I can't be kind enough, Bab; that's my great grievance. I can't show you, and I can't tell you, how dear you are to me,—how much I love thee."

"Hush, Harry. I mustn't listen to you. You shouldn't say such things to me."

"Why not, Bab? Because you——" The Captain's voice faltered, and he stopped.

"No," says Lady Barbara innocently; "because my grandmother——"

"Bless you, Bab." And the officer kissed his young relative. As he had previously stated there was no one looking.

"Was that what you had to say to me?" inquires Bab, with shy roguishness.

"I had a world of things to say to you, Bab. It's putting them very shortly when I say 'I love thee.' Yet that's the sum of them perhaps, when they come to be added up. I love thee, Bab. And you? I feel very obstinate. I've a great mind to say you shall love me whether you will or not. But that would be rude, perhaps."

"I think I should like to have a little will of my own left me,—just the least bit in the world, please, Harry. It won't make so very much difference, after all, perhaps." And she let her hand slide into his. Presently she started. "Was that thunder?"

The balcony looked on to St. James's Square. Above the glow of the many links and lanthorns could be seen a sulphurous and lurid sky, and over the hubbub and jangling of the horses and carriages and their attendants, could be heard the sullen roar of thunder.

"The storm's coming on. Fear nothing, Bab. Here's my amulet against danger." Captain Brabazon took from his breast a crumpled little coil of ribbon and finery.

"My pompon!" She uttered a little scream. "The one the robber stole!"

"I had thought of restoring it, but, upon reflection, I mean to keep it. May I?"

"But how did it come into your hands, Harry?"

"You didn't recognise the Piccadilly highwayman, then?"

"What!—you were the highwayman?"

"To think that a crape vizard and a horse-pistol should make such a difference! You didn't know me, Bab? I had grown to be such a giant in size, and my aspect had turned so suddenly ferocious? It was the magic of your fears that had changed me; for all I looked so dreadful, I was still but Harry Brabazon,—your fond, foolish cousin masquerading as a knight of the road. How frightened you were; I felt sorry then, for indeed I love thee too dearly to harm a hair of thy head, or cause thee a moment's pang. And yet how pretty you looked when you fainted! I longed to wake thee back to life again by my kisses. A mad prank, wasn't it? But I was mad that day. You'd been so harsh with me at Lady Careless's over-night, that I had thought to drown my cares in Burgundy, and faith I think I fairly drowned my senses too. Yet 'twas your fault, Bab, when all's said. See what comes of being cruel."

"Indeed, cousin, I meant not to be cruel. But I was so wretched. I had been so scolded,—I felt so weak I couldn't pluck up spirit to be wilful."

"You obeyed the Countess's orders implicitly I know. You'd scarcely give me a word or a look, much less the flower I asked you for, that you wore in your bosom. You let it fade, and threw it away, rather than give it to me. So I was bent on vengeance. I took the pompon, and I've worn it here ever since."

"Oh, Harry, how can you be so desperate and wicked?"

"Nay, Bab, have you stolen nothing? What say you to my ease and quiet? Where is the little thief that has filched my heart from my very breast? I could have borne with fewer sighs and less uneasiness the loss of all the wealth in the world. Was Love the bandit? Nay, the rogue professes to be blindfold, and so wears something of a highwayman's mask over his face. Or was Bab the depredator? Or are Bab and Love all one? 'Ods life, I think so. I'm not worthy of thee, pretty one. I know it. I'm but a poor soldier,—poorer in that I've led something of a fool's life hitherto. But then I had not the motive for wise conduct, my love for thee now gives me, Bab. You shall make me wise and good henceforth, my cousin; for indeed, who could linger near thee but for a moment

and not be bettered by the purity and sweetness that spring from thee as the perfume from a flower."

"Dear Harry, I love thee; and, so far as I may——"

"I know, I know,—the Countess is our stumbling-block. But never fear, I'll make thee mine, heaven willing, in spite of her. She is but mortal, after all. I frightened her rarely t'other day with my horse-pistol. I could scarce hold it steady for laughing. But I owed her something for her bad treatment of me,—of both of us,—for the tales she's told you of me. She was never so scared in her life. Not but she's brave enough. She'd have shot or stabbed me if she'd had a weapon handy. How she growled and ground her teeth and swore under her breath! Yet she shivered, too, and turned pale, in spite of her paint. I punished her, not a doubt of it."

"She'll never forgive you, Harry."

"Then I must e'en make shift to do without her ladyship's forgiveness."

There came another peal of thunder. Lady Bab screamed,—not only because of the thunder, however. There was another, and, for the moment, even a more potent reason for terror. The Dowager Countess stood beside the young couple in the balcony, with so sinister and malevolent an expression upon her wrinkled, rouged visage that she seemed to be quite the kind of personage whose appearance might reasonably be expected to be attended by thunder and lightning and other appropriate and redoubtable accompaniments.

"What do you here, child?" she demanded, in angry, grating tones, scanning her grand-daughter with fierce eyes. "Go to the ball-room instantly. My Lord Bellasis has been seeking you everywhere. He would honour you with his hand in a minuet. Go!"

Lady Barbara fled like a scared hare. She dared not even turn to bestow a parting glance upon her lover.

IV.

"You here?" The Dowager Countess turned wrathfully upon Captain Brabazon.

"I had the honour of receiving your ladyship's card."

"I thought you were in gaol."

"In gaol?" repeated the Captain, with surprise in his voice.

"Oh, I only mean for debt. No doubt you've been cunning enough to keep clear of graver offences—as yet. For all you know the hemp may be grown and spun for your proper neckcloth, nevertheless. You'd have worn it long since, if deserving had anything to do with it."

"I know that I have not had the good fortune to win your ladyship's favourable opinion."

"You know that you're a villain!"

"I have never learned to set great store upon myself, madam. For

hard words I care little,—nor, for that matter, for hard blows either. Your ladyship is, of course, at liberty to style me villain, if it so please you,—or, indeed, to bestow upon me any other opprobrious and insulting epithet. I promise to be not greatly stirred in any case. I hold myself to be simply a soldier, who has fought and bled,—I would say it with all modesty,—for his king and country. As to my honour, I maintain it to be unblemished, and I shall be glad to meet the man who presumes to have a contrary opinion."

"Are you not a gambler? Do you not haunt that pit of destruction, White's?"

"Sits the wind in that quarter? I have played; I own it. I have lost, and paid my losses. Who dares say otherwise? I did wrong, it may be,—nay, I will avow it. Still, I have but followed the mode. Why should I, then, be singled out for blame from among all the Countess of Dangerfield's guests?"

"Profligate! do you know whither you are hurrying?"

"I see your ladyship has taken up with the Methodist's vocation." The Captain laughed bluntly. "I don't doubt your ladyship will become the conventicle purely. When may we expect, dare I ask, that diamond necklace to be changed for the preacher's bands?"

"Scoffer!"

"Yet I think I have seen your ladyship handle the cards deftly enough. At odd times, too, I fancy your ladyship has even brandished the dice-box, and thrown a main with the best,—I should say the worst of us. Faith, now I remember, it was my grand-aunt, the Countess of Dangerfield, who, when I was a child, first taught me to know one card from another. My first game of cribbage was played in your ladyship's lap. I wasn't tall enough to reach to the table."

With an angry movement of her head, the Countess seemed to toss the topic away from her.

"I know what you would do, sirrah. You would repair your shattered state with my grandchild's fortune."

"It's a—pardon me!" The Captain checked himself in an angry outburst. "Your ladyship is mistaken. You do me grave injustice. If your ladyship has any friend wearing a sword, and willing to repeat such a charge against me, I shall know better how to deal with him. I shall reply to him with less forbearance than I am bound to exhibit towards your ladyship, I warrant you."

"How, sirrah? Do you not persist in following the child like her shadow? Have you not persecuted her with your odious attentions?"

"I love my cousin, madam; I own it frankly. Why should I not love her? Who will hinder me? How, indeed, can I help loving her? For her fortune, it is nothing to me. I ask not for it. I want it not,—nay, it is hateful to me rather, in that it seems in some

sort to bar my way to winning her,—and that, to the evil thinking, it taints with a suspicion of self-seeking a passion, heaven knows, to be absolutely pure and truthful.”

The Countess laughed acridly. “Spare your playhouse speeches, sir,” she said. “Such tinsel blandishments may beguile milkmaids and silly chits of seventeen; but, indeed, I know their trumpery nature too well. I’m an old woman, and I’ve been behind the scenes too often. Lady Barbara is not for you, nor for such as you. I forbid your speaking to her again.”

“I am her kinsman, madam.”

“Fiddlestick! While she is under my roof you shall not approach her. You her suitor, her husband! It shall not be, I say.”

“Pardon me. I say it shall.” The Captain bowed with an air of severe politeness. The Dowager Countess drew herself up, and addressed him with much majesty.

“Captain Brabazon,—nephew, if you prefer it,—for I will suppose you to be my nephew,—your mother always said you were, and more, persuaded your father to believe as much,—some men are so credulous!—you’ll not darken my door again. I’ll have your black face no more in my house. It was through a blunder of my groom of the chambers that you received a card for this night. The blockhead shall be dismissed for his stupidity. And harkee, sir; we’re strangers henceforth, remember. My grand-daughter is not for you,—nor her money, nor is mine,—not even to the fee-simple of a rope and a shilling. So abandon, pray, all foolish expectations in that regard. Don’t dare to send to me, sir, for aid, in whatever straits you may be in,—unless, indeed, you’re condemned to ride backward up Holborn Hill. In such case I should like to secure a window with a good view of Tyburn tree. Good night. My servants shall show you the way out, and quickly too, if you have difficulty in finding the door.”

The look of the Dowager Countess was particularly venomous as she delivered herself of this bitter speech. The Captain replied with considerable calmness;—

“If I should be the first Brabazon to suffer at the hands of Mr. Ketch, madam, I shall not, possibly, be the first of the family who has merited helping from the world by that unpleasant functionary. For my mother,—of whom your ladyship has spoken with so tender a grace,—I am happy to think that she is now where she is little likely to be hurt by your taunts, or incommoded by your presence. I refer to heaven, madam. Your ladyship needs to be informed, perhaps, that there is such a place. For my own doom, whatever it may be,—the three-legged tree at Tyburn, if your ladyship will have it so,—I don’t doubt that fortitude will be duly given me to endure it as a man should. May your ladyship be not less prepared when your own time arrives.”



"What do you mean, sirrah! how dare you?" the Countess began in a quavering angry voice.

"I mean good-night and good-bye. I will not further trespass upon your ladyship's hospitality. The sight of my black face shall no longer disturb your ladyship's vision. Only this I would say;—I love my cousin Barbara, and I mean to win her. I am your ladyship's most obedient humble servant."

For some minutes the countess stood leaning against the balcony, as though musing in an abstracted way over the words that had been addressed to her. Presently she was startled by the flashing of the lightning; with a shiver, she pinched her hoop beneath her elbows, and hurriedly re-entered the ball-room.

The Captain, with a flushed face and a somewhat fiery gleam in his eyes, had bowed low, and quitted her. But he did not withdraw from the house immediately. He lingered for some time on the staircase and in the vestibule, in the hope of a parting word with Lady Barbara, or even of one more glimpse of his charming cousin. In this respect he was not destined to be gratified. He encountered the young lady no more on that evening. As he turned from St. James's Square, he found the storm without approaching its height. The heat was intense. The lightning flashed, and the thunder rolled and crackled overhead with amazing violence.

"I bet you it isn't thunder; I'll give you odds," said a languid coxcomb in a suit of blue and silver, lounging on the staircase. "I'll bet you it's the powder-mills at Hounslow exploding. Powder-mills always exploding at Hounslow. Or I'll take you, if you like. Will any one bet?"

"For shame," exclaimed an alarmed gentleman in clerical garb, hurrying from the rout; "gambling at such a moment! I do believe there are men, who, if they were to hear the last trump, would give odds that it was only the bugle-call of the Life Guards. What times we live in! No wonder the heavens roar!"

There came a prolonged and deafening peal of thunder.

"No, I won't bet. It can't be powder-mills. Or they must be nearer town than Hounslow." And the gentleman in blue and silver paled somewhat, and tapped his jewelled snuff-box with trembling fingers.

The lightning without was now so incessant and so intensely vivid, that the candles in the ball-room seemed to burn but dully and dimly; their flames flickered and smoked; a hazy dun red hue pervaded the chamber, by contrast with the blue-white sheet of fire that was blazing in the sky. Another roar of thunder, and a panic seized the Countess's guests. They felt, or thought they felt, the house over their heads shaken to its foundations. The window-panes rattled and were shivered to pieces; the curtains swayed, and bellied out like the canvas of a ship in full sail; doors banged violently, and

in all parts of the house bells were set ringing; the ground rocked and trembled; the chandeliers swung from the ceilings to and fro like pendulums; a large mirror over the chimney-piece suddenly cracked all over, with a noise like the explosion of a musket; the stores of precious china ornaments were flung from their shelves, and shattered on the floor. Hysterical screams of terror were heard; there was wild hurrying hither and thither; women swooned, and men swore; a few fell on their knees in prayer. The musicians abandoned their instruments, and rushed from the room. Then arose on the part of all present a frantic desire to quit the scene of festivity as soon as might be. A surging, frightened, shrieking crowd, choked the passages and staircases, and streamed into the open street. Torrents of rain were falling, and still overhead the lightning, in great pulsations, was stirring and sundering the skies, and the thunder sounding and reverberating on all sides with frightful violence. But no matter for soaked finery, mired velvets, and draggled silks. It was held best and safest to be out of doors. The splendid mansion of the Dowager Countess was declared doomed. An agonised consternation blanched every face. One cry was on every lip:—"THE EARTHQUAKE!"

The card-tables were overturned by the awe-stricken players, in their precipitate anxiety to abandon their game, and make good their escape. Cards and counters, money and candles, strewed the carpets. The world of fashion had never known such a night of horror. Society was shaken to its very centre. The quality seemed smitten with frenzy and paralysis, at one blow.

People were heard declaring that one particular flash of lightning had turned all the clubs and spades in the pack, bright red; and all the hearts and diamonds deep black. This was at the pharo-table. "Thank heaven, I never play pharo, but always brag or cribbage," gasped a lady of quality; "so the storm was not pointed at me. But I don't think I'll ever touch a card again. Ah!" Screaming, she covered her eyes with her hands, to shut out the blinding glare of the lightning, as she tottered to the door.

The Dowager Countess lay stretched on the floor of her grand withdrawing room. She had swooned. Lady Barbara, trembling terribly, bent over her, bathing her temples with vinegar.

Every now and then, with twitching face, and glassy eyes, and chattering teeth, the Countess moaned, "The earthquake! The second shock! Beware of the third!" Over and over again. "The earthquake! The second shock! Beware of the third!" The Dowager Countess was changed indeed. There could be no further question on that head now.

It was an awful night certainly. But one person seemed wholly undisturbed by its fell terrors and calamities. After all, what is

even an earthquake to a lover? The very heavens may fall, so his passion but prosper.

Captain Brabazon, tripping lightly along to his lodgings in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, had heart to sing, and to make his voice heard above the turbulent accompaniment with which the full orchestra of the elements was now so abundantly affording him,—

“Tell me, Chloe, tell me pray,  
How long must Damon sue?  
But fix the time and I’ll obey,  
With patience wait the happy day  
That makes me sure of you.”

His song went, something after that fashion.

Anon from verse, he would drop to prose, still of a rapt and exalted sort.

“Love her? dearest Bab!” he exclaimed; “of course I love her. Is she not made to be loved? Could one love a dearer, purer, kinder little soul? Does not sweetness lodge in her lips, beauty in her cheeks, wit in her forehead, and fondness in her eyes? Am I to love her the less because I may fail to win her? Is my heart to change towards her because fate may forbid her to be mine? No! ‘Come what come may,’ as the fellow cries at the play-house, I’ll love her for ever, and make her my own some day,—if I can. I don’t quite see how to set about it, I own. But some chance will favour me. Loving her, as I know I do; loving me, as I think she does; have I not reason to be happy now, and to hope for greater happiness in the future?” He argued himself into a very comfortable state of mind in this respect. Presently he felt a little less at ease, however, as he scowled, and muttered with clenched teeth, “But then, her grandmother!” And thereupon he gave expression to much vehement vituperation in regard to the nature and disposition of his noble kinswoman, the Dowager Countess of Dangerfield.

“One thing, however, I know,” he added presently. “She is but mortal, and she’s to be frightened!”

The Captain was thinking merely of his adventure as a highwayman in Piccadilly. Lady Dangerfield had been alarmed on that occasion, no doubt. How much more terrified she had been when the earthquake dispersed her guests, Captain Brabazon was not yet fully informed.

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## RICHARD COBDEN.

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It was once tauntingly remarked by a public speaker that he, for his part, had never seen this British constitution of which it had been his fortune or misfortune to hear so much; and though the circumstance may be thought to tell rather in the way of commendation than of disparagement, there can be no doubt that the constitution of England is one of those things which it is extremely difficult to see. Was it not Charles Lamb who complained that he could not see the ocean at all, but only some small speck of it from on board a Margate hoy? Even in mid Atlantic you can see but the space within your own horizon,—a space about as large, in proportion to the whole, as a leaf of clover to a twenty-acre field in May. The ocean, the atmosphere, and the constitution of the British empire, are things which can be seen only little by little. But it is pretty certain that, if we look well at what we can see of ocean from cliff or mast, and if we note carefully the sky above our heads, whether it roofs with blue the deep pastoral valley, or is pierced by the “craggy spear” of Andes or Himalaya, we shall form a correct enough idea of what the ocean and the atmosphere are like; and if, from advantageous points of view, such as are afforded us in tracing the career of men who have played an important part in our national affairs, we bring successively under inspection a variety of those laws, influences, contrivances, usages, institutions, which go to make up the general political and social system under which we live, we may arrive at an approximately correct and practically serviceable notion of that vast, indefinite, complex entity called the British constitution. As we watch a Palmerston or a Peel rising, step by step, to a supreme place in the commonwealth, we perceive what may be described as the ordinary, normal, commonplace action of our governmental machinery. The subtler workings,—the wheels within wheels,—of parliamentary government, are revealed by glimpses in the questionable manoeuvres by which a Phœbus Apollo Lyndhurst, making himself like unto the night, vexed the Whigs. The influence, in Parliament and society, of an individual mass of force and meteoric fire, is illustrated in such a career as Brougham's. Our ecclesiastical politics and political ecclesiasticism, in their confused welter and miserable jargon, are tragi-comically displayed in the wraths and wranglings of Henry of Exeter. O'Connell's foiled energy and all but fruitless expenditure of magnificent brain-power, enable us to realise

that peril of feverish and futile agitation to which our limitless freedom of tongue exposes us.

Many points of view for the advantageous contemplation of constitutional England are afforded by the career of Richard Cobden. "We have lost a man," said Lord Palmerston in the House of Commons at the time of his death, "who may be considered to be peculiarly emblematical of the constitution under which we have the happiness to live, because he rose to great eminence in this House, and rose to acquire an ascendancy in the public mind, not by virtue of any family connections, but solely and entirely in consequence of the power and vigour of his mind, that power and vigour being applied to purposes evidently advantageous to his country." On the same occasion Mr. Disraeli pronounced him "without doubt the greatest political character that the pure middle class of this country has yet produced." What a middle-class politician, a citizen and nothing more, may effect in England, can in no way be more fitly shown than in the achievements of Cobden. His public life will teach us also, in expressive characters which he that runs may read, that there are two Parliaments in Great Britain,—the Parliament of the whole people, and the Parliament, a committee of this larger Parliament, which sits at Westminster. The problem of influencing the larger Parliament in such wise as to exert a pressure upon the lesser Parliament, was never solved with more striking effect than by Mr. Cobden. If the career of O'Connell illustrates a species of agitation which is distempered and perilous,—a mere inflammation of the national lungs and windpipe,—the agitation headed by Cobden presents a fine example of a popular agitation warm with the genial energy of health, animated by sound principles, and tending to salutary ends. The voice of the people, speaking through the lips of Richard Cobden, was very clearly, for once at least, the voice of God.

Cobden came of good farmer people, who had tilled their own land for generations in the weald of Sussex. The farmhouse of Dunford, in the pleasant neighbourhood of Midhurst, was the scene of his birth; the time, June 3rd, 1804. The first and deepest impressions of his life were derived from the country, and it was at Dunford that the leader of the Manchester school passed his closing years. Though, to a hasty observer, he might seem encased in a shell of hard utilitarian shrewdness, it was known to all who knew Cobden well that the basis of his character was a delicate though masculine simplicity, and that there lay deep in his nature a vein of almost poetic sympathy. His whole life long, he was more of a countryman than a townsman. Mr. Disraeli proved that he thoroughly understood him when he said that "there was in his character a peculiar vein of reverence for tradition," and that he knew, however strongly he might urge improvements, that "this country is still old England." He had a country boy's love for animals and rural sights and sounds,

and an Englishman's veneration for his parish church and for religion. "You have no hold of any one," he said, "who has no religious faith." In the heat of the noontide we are apt to have little thought of the dewdrops and the softly-tinted clouds of morning and evening; and as we follow Cobden through the arid noonday of his controversial logic and severe economy, we are apt to forget that he was cradled amid the associations and impressions of a profoundly rural district, and that he died an English farmer.

He was still a boy when he lost his father. Proceeding to London, he entered a warehouse. He gave proof of an original cast of mind by an eager thirst for knowledge and voracity in reading. He became acquainted with Smith's "*Wealth of Nations*," and ardently adopted the principles of the book. From the counting-house he passed to the road, in capacity of commercial traveller. There is no post connected with a mercantile establishment which affords more scope for talent, more opportunities of observation, or a more invigorating and quickening discipline for the mind. In the disputations of the commercial-room young Cobden distinguished himself by the decision of his free-trade principles, by the acuteness of his remarks, and by the urbanity and simple refinement of his manners. Alert and energetic, he was successful in his vocation, and impressed all who knew him with an idea of his superiority. For such a man it is not difficult to rise in England. Cobden had no money; but when an opportunity presented itself for his establishment in business, he obtained from a friend, whose confidence in his probity was absolute, a loan of the necessary capital. The business in which he engaged was that of calico-printing, and he was soon on the highway to fortune as member of a prosperous firm with three establishments, one in London, one at Clitheroe, and one, under the special management of Cobden, in Manchester. He was now twenty-six.

The man who could thus early find for himself a field, was the man to succeed in it. The experience gained in his journeys as a commercial traveller stood him in good stead when it was his object to supply a saleable article for English markets. Fertile in resource, enterprising, skilful to discern what patterns would commend themselves to the general taste, he ventured on a bolder and less tentative policy than had been customary in the trade, anticipating, rather than watching, the popular preference, and pushing sales when his more wary neighbours were experimenting by a few samples thrown off in the first instance, upon the probabilities of public favour. The goods which could not be sold at home were shipped for the foreign markets, and Cobden had thus occasion to become a commercial traveller on a larger scale than he had formerly attempted. He journeyed both in Europe and America, seeking markets in both hemispheres. Cobden's prints became famous, and in ten or eleven

years after commencing business, he is stated to have been making about £10,000 per annum.

A commonplace character would now have settled into a commonplace money-maker and cotton-lord, and Richard Cobden would have been known only as one of a thousand millionaires whom gold has been unable to raise above moral and intellectual insignificance. But there were well-springs in his nature, well-springs of human sympathy, noble intelligence and cosmopolitan tenderness, which not even the perilous atmosphere of monetary success could chill and freeze. As he journeyed over Europe and America, he revolved many thoughts in his mind. His speculations took their start from political economy, which passes with many, not for a warm-blooded, flesh-clothed science, but for a skeleton, gaunt and bare, through whose haggard jaws a barren east-wind of disputation is for ever whistling. That there is some reason for believing political economy to be such a thing as this, may, we daresay, be the case; for prevailing persuasions have generally a root in fact; but we have never become acquainted with a political economy, except such as was caricatured by men and women who had failed to comprehend the real science, respecting which the description would be correct. We have looked pretty extensively into the works of political economists, and have found in them as much human feeling and brotherly kindness as in other books. We have found them characterised, also, not only by masterly power, but by a singular absence of pretence or parade, by a modesty of self-estimate on the part of their authors, by a quiet contentment that their science should depend for acceptance, not on rhetorical vaunting of its claims or flourishes of sentimental verbiage, but on the truth of its doctrines. Even, however, by those who are most eloquent in their denunciation of Mill and Ricardo, a glance of favour is cast upon Adam Smith, and at the feet of Adam Smith Cobden sat with the affection, enthusiasm, and reverence of a scholar who had received from the master far nobler lessons than how to grow rich. For England the science of political economy was not only created, but brought practically to completion by Smith. Some few points remained to be adjusted by the errorless logic of Ricardo and the clear, quick sense of Mill; but those grand principles of the science which affect the policy of nations and the duty of statesmen were, once and for ever, expounded by Smith. And what is the sum and substance of those principles? Simply this,—that, for nations as for individuals, the interest of one is the interest of all; and that, therefore, if the human family are to make the most of the planet in which they sail through space, every obstacle to the exchange of the products of their common labour which man can remove, must be removed. To this central truth is added the complementary hint,—not flattering to human pride,—that, in the promotion of interest,



whether individual or national, the right and fruitful method is to interpret, obey, and occasionally modify the ordinances of nature; while the futile or destroying method is to put these aside, and to substitute for them the presumptuous blunders of human wisdom, the saccharine poison of human sentimentality, the indigent rapacity of human greed, or any other form of immoral selfishness. It seems to us natural and consistent that the promulgation of these doctrines by Smith should have followed upon the enunciation, by the same author, of a theory by which the ethical and emotional judgments of mankind are accounted for on the ground of sympathy. The doctrine of the second and greater book is as accordant with warmth of feeling as the doctrine of the first; and the treatise on the wealth of nations has done incomparably more to advance human brotherhood than the theory of moral sentiments. It is, in fact, curious to reflect that Adam Smith, the quietest of men, should, by the impalpable ministry of his ideas, have made himself one of the great lawgivers of modern civilisation, and left a mark in the history of the world deeper than that imprinted by the mailed hand of Frederick or Napoleon. "This solitary Scotchman," says Mr. Buckle, "has, by the publication of one single work, contributed more towards the happiness of man, than has been effected by the united abilities of all the statesmen and legislators of whom history has preserved an authentic record." A less extravagant writer than Mr. Buckle,—Sir James Mackintosh,—had previously noted the historical fact that Smith's book produced "an immediate, general, and irrevocable change in some of the most important parts of the legislation of all civilised States." Laws began to be altered, and treaties dictated, as was decreed by the placid and unpretending thinker of Kirkaldy. It was thought clever of Frederick the Great, when told that some one had been writing against him, to ask, How many battalions can he bring into the field? But the shrewd warrior may have taken after all a shallow view of the case. Before deciding, one would like to know what kind of writer it was for whom Frederick entertained so easy a contempt. Few men could have seemed less formidable to the Nimrods of the earth than the mild sage of Kirkaldy; and yet, as he walked in the leafy lanes about the town, or sauntered on the shore of the neighbouring sea, was he not drilling under his hat an army of ideas, compared with which the best disciplined squadrons of Frederick were weak? One reason why Mr. Buckle spoke more enthusiastically of the influence of Adam Smith than Sir James Mackintosh may have been that he wrote thirty or forty years later, and that every year of the century has widened the triumph of Smith's principles.

Traversing Europe and America with vigilant eye and meditative heart, Cobden had no lack of opportunities for applying the doctrines of his master. That filiation of human interests which Smith delighted to

trace,—how man works for man in all times and countries, and it is only by the harmonious activity of myriads that the life of any one man can be commodiously supplied,—appears to have profoundly impressed him. It is, in fact, curious to reflect what a diversity of effort, what a web of complicated industries, goes to furnish forth one civilised man. The stream at which we heedlessly drink rose in the earliest dawn of history from far away mountains, at whose feet mankind began their pilgrimage. Would the coat of a mere labouring man have been upon his back if Jabal, son of Lamech, had not tamed the “silly sheep,” and his obliging, strong-limbed brother, Tubal Cain, provided shears to clip them, while Jubal entertained the gifted pair with the tinkle-tinkle of his incipient music? Or why return to the family of Cain, the latest of our white-washed heroes, and the legends of his house? Our friend of Kirkaldy, ruminating patiently by the Frith of Forth, will make more of the coat of our, or rather of his, illustration than we are likely to do, even with the aid of George Eliot. “The woollen coat,” says Adam Smith, “which covers the day-labourer, as coarse and rough as it may appear, is the produce of the joint labour of a great multitude of workmen. The shepherd, the sorter of the wool, the wool-comber or carder, the dyer, the scribbler, the spinner, the weaver, the fuller, the dresser, with many others, must all join their different arts in order to complete even this homely production. How many merchants and carriers, besides, must have been employed in transporting the materials from some of those workmen to others, who often live in a very distant part of the country? How much commerce and navigation in particular, how many ship-builders, sailors, sail-makers, rope-makers, must have been employed in order to bring together the different drugs made use of by the dyer, which often come from the remotest corner of the world? What a variety of labour, too, is necessary in order to produce the tools of the meanest of those workmen! To say nothing of such complicated machines as the ship of the sailor, the mill of the fuller, or even the loom of the weaver, let us consider only what a variety of labour is requisite in order to form that very simple machine, the shears with which the shepherd clips the wool. The miner, the builder of the furnace for smelting the ore, the feller of the timber, the burner of the charcoal to be made use of in the smelting-house, the brickmaker, the bricklayer, the workmen who attend the furnace, the millwright, the forger, the smith, must all of them join their different arts in order to produce them.” This is not nearly all which long-headed, ruminating Adam has to say on the trouble which it takes to equip a labouring man in a civilised country, so that, be he no more than an industrious and frugal peasant, his accommodation shall “exceed that of many an African king, the absolute master of ten thousand naked savages.”

It is not difficult to understand how Richard Cobden, musing as he

wandered over Europe and America on passages like this of Smith, should have found political economy a thing admitting of genial association with that home-bred kindness of nature which he had brought with him from the wooded lanes of Sussex, and with the simplicity of his affection for old England. Political economy did not strike him as a dismal science, nor commerce as the corrupter of mankind; and the poetry of mechanical industry, sung in Schiller's "*Song of the Bell*," seemed to him as deep as the poetry of Homer's battles or of Virgil's swains.

His rustic boyhood may have benefited him also in relation to political economy by enabling him to penetrate the luminous haze of that sentimentality with which eloquent denouncers of the dismal science are too apt to obscure the realities of country life. Cobden knew that it takes more than a rose-bush and a weather-stained, lichen-silvered cottage to make a peasant family happy. He had seen in his native Sussex homesteads, rich in mossy thatch and picturesque litter, such as a Morland might have delighted to paint, labourers' dwellings "dirtied with no white lime," fringed with fern and mellowed with years, which a Southey might imagine to have been "raised by the magic of some indigenous Amphion's music," and he knew that they had harboured very unromantic misery. He would thus have felt himself admonished to look to statistics of pauperism, and rates of mortality, as well as to clipt box hedges and gardens bright with hollyoaks. When Cobden was a stripling, the poor-rate had been higher in Sussex than in any county of England, and that at the time when Cobbett was praising its peasants' gardens. In one word, traversing Europe with Smith's "*Wealth of Nations*" in his hand and memories of English country life in his heart, Cobden became a political economist who allowed himself to be beguiled by no illusions, who could perform the stern yet imperative duty of recognising the limits placed by nature to human felicity, but who at the same time laid the grasp of a giant upon those facts on which the welfare of peoples and the progress of civilisation really depend, and could discern wherein man's insolent attempts to improve upon nature's arrangements increase ten-fold the evils they are designed to amend.

The main propositions of that science, dismal or beneficent, which Cobden apprehended with intense clearness, and the application of which to the commercial system of England constituted his work as a public man and a statesman, admit of being stated with brevity. The world is a richly furnished, variegated world, with here a range of mountains having ribs of iron, and there a ridge of rocks with veins of gold; here vastly extended plains capable of growing corn, there magazines of coal sufficient for the consumption of a thousand years; here terraced vineyards, there hills of olives; here islands that perfume the gale with their spices, there breadths of green fields with wandering flocks and herds. Such a world is exactly adapted for man, and man is exactly adapted for such a world. The more he

makes of the planet, the more the planet makes of him. There is a perfect harmony between the two,—a fitness to be conquered, tilled, utilised, on the part of the earth, a capacity to utilise, till, and conquer, on the part of man. This fact is admitted by all schools of philosophy and theology; for the most thorough-going positivist will not refuse to grant that such a being as man could have chanced to exist only when a sufficient number of ærolites had chanced to wheel themselves into precisely such a planet as Earth. The instrument by which man subdues the world to himself is labour. There is, perhaps, no spot in the planet which cannot be made to yield something to human labour, and there is certainly no spot which without labour affords adequate supplies to human need. Hence, as labour is the first word in political economy, division of labour is the second. The way in which man can do any one thing with the highest attainable perfection is by devoting himself to that one thing; and if each man in a thousand concentrates his energy upon one thing, a thousand articles will be produced in a state of higher perfection, and a greater accommodation will consequently be produced for the thousand men, than if each had roughly made shift to furnish himself with all the articles. In like manner, if each spot of earth is made to yield the particular article which it is specially fitted to yield, the products will be superior to what they would be if the attempt were made to procure all from the same soil. The way to get a consummately good nail is to find a man who will do nothing but make nails; and if you wish to have the best corn and the best oil, you must grow wheat on the flats of Essex, and olives on the flanks of the Apennines. If, therefore, the first word in political economy is labour, and the second is division of labour, these terms being held to include the entire organisation of labour, the third word in political economy is exchange. Labour, division of labour, exchange of the products of labour,—in these three is the whole of political economy; and the conviction which sank deep into the heart of Cobden was that the essential condition of prosperity for all three is to leave them well alone. One more discovery, and the work of his life was cut out for him. He found that in no province of human affairs had Governments so persistently and perversely interfered with the simplicity of nature's adjustments as in this; he saw that, though here principally, yet in every department of affairs as well, nations had suffered from the officiousness, the incapacity to content themselves with their own business, the itch of intermeddling, displayed by their Governments; and it became the aim, the passionate striving, of his life, to impress Governments with the danger of doing evil in attempts to do well, and to induce them to undo the evil which their meddling and muddling had wrought.

There was thus undeniably a negative aspect imparted to the activity of Cobden as a public man. He said more frequently to

Governments, "thou shalt not" than "thou shalt." In the eyes of political economists of the rhetorical, sentimental, and fanciful kind, this is the unpardonable sin of him and his school. Those eloquent and angry gentlemen err, not in maintaining that Governments have important duties to perform, but in neglecting to inquire searchingly what those duties are. A want of accurate knowledge either of past history or of present affairs,—a habit of puerile romancing,—a girlish ignorance of the practicalities of life and of human nature,—have led them to declaim vaguely against men who, knowing the facts of the case, stated them calmly, and reasoned from them conclusively. The image of a supreme power,—infallible, beneficent, omniscient, omnipotent,—named "the State," floats before these visionaries, and they cannot be convinced, let the evidence of the past be what it may, that the State is not all this, and that measureless evil arises from its "assuming the god." They call upon their Baal to work all manner of miracles, forgetful that constantly, when you want him to do something for you, he is either pursuing game, or talking twaddle, or lounging in his club, or asleep and requiring to be awaked. That there is such a thing as decreeing injustice by law,—that a statute of the realm may be the systematising of calamity,—that Government officials will possibly peculate, and certainly job,—that in practical affairs men have commonly a choice, not of ideals, but of evils,—are considerations which these high-flying gentlemen, whose political economy has that relation to the work of the real masters of the science which the flight of a gay party over a fortified town in a balloon has to the work of the commander who batters down its walls with his artillery, never take into account.

Of all the interferences which Government can make with nature's regulations as to labour and exchange, the most obviously unreasonable and pernicious is a law forbidding people who have bread to sell from bringing it to market. As nothing which we have been saying is in contravention of the proposition that man, in all his institutions,—his law, his labour, his art,—is the controller and modifier of nature, we need not hesitate to say that instances may be specified in which Governments, regulating the exchange of commodities, must follow nature with slow and cautious step, and beware of attempting to adopt at once the law which she has appointed for a particular case. If a large population, men, women, children, derive their sustenance from collecting and burning kelp, and if, on the sudden cessation of their industry, they will be resourceless, no Government can be justified in giving instantaneous scope to an invention, say, in chemistry, by which kelp must be immediately driven from the market. Nature, indeed, is sure to prevail in the long run, and this fact it will be the duty of the Government in question to acknowledge and keep in view. The chemical invention is an increase of human power, and will sooner or later

accomplish nature's aim of supporting a larger population, or accommodating a larger number, than had been previously reached. But the first duty of Governments is to consider the life and well-being of their subjects at any particular time; and if it could be proved against a Government that, in the transition from kelp-burning to the more recent method of obtaining iodine, or in the transition between hand-loom weaving and power-loom weaving, a single family had been starved, nay, that one man, woman, or child, had perished, the Government concerned might justly be accused of incompetence or callousness. Only in rare cases, however, could this result occur, as nature has her own plans for managing transitions, and while giving the victory to the new over the old, invariably throws difficulties in the way of new things. In the vast majority of instances, Governments have erred, not by obeying nature too impetuously, or too implicitly, but by contravening her ordinances; and never was nature more unreasonably disobeyed than when the markets of England were shut to the corn of the world.

Prepared for his work by careful study and extended observation, Richard Cobden began in early manhood to diminish the intensity of devotion with which he had hitherto pushed his fortune, and to appear before his countryman in the character of political writer and public man. Mr. Prentice, historian of the Anti-Corn-Law League, was then editor of a Manchester paper, and became acquainted with Cobden through the circumstance of his having sent some letters, under the signature of "*Libra*," for publication in its columns. It is a slight but characteristic circumstance that Cobden should have selected as signature to his first political letters the word *Balance*. It was in a mood of severe and unimpassioned justice that he assayed to weigh the arguments used on this side and on that of public questions. Mr. Prentice, on knowing him personally, was impressed with the quietness of his demeanour, by his unassuming modesty and the conspicuous absence of fuss and forwardness. "I missed," he says, "in the unassuming gentleman before me, not the energy, but the apparent hardihood and dash which I had believed to be requisites to the success of a popular leader." Mr. Cathrall, Prentice's partner, formed a similar idea of the author of the letters of "*Libra*." He describes Cobden as "very diffident, and somewhat nervous in temperament." But both Cathrall and Prentice felt that there was something in his presence to correspond with the power displayed in his letters. He associated himself with the most liberal section of Manchester politicians, interested himself in the movement for the incorporation of the city, and became an alderman at the first election of civic functionaries which took place after it obtained its municipal charter.

It was in September, 1837, that the Anti-Corn-Law League came into existence. Dr. Bowring, who had distinguished himself by the

decision of his free-trade principles, was visiting Manchester; the Free-traders of the town entertained him at a banquet; the company grew enthusiastic in their denunciation of the Corn Laws; and on the spur of the moment a Mr. Howie, who has won a place in history by a single happy thought, suggested that the banqueteers should there and then form themselves into an Anti-Corn-Law Association, and demand total abolition. The proposal was adopted with acclamation. In the second list of committee-men published by the League appeared the name of Cobden, and he was soon recognised as the mainspring of the new organisation.

If representative Government could be perfectly realised,—if Parliament could be absolutely depended on to discern what the nation wants, and to adapt legislation to its necessities,—such agencies as the Anti-Corn-Law League would have no place in what, giving the term its widest application, we have called the constitution of England. The influence of such societies is essentially of a plebiscitary nature, and all Europe is crying out at this moment that plebiscitary impulses are foreign to the genius of representative institutions. It was from some such view that Brougham, while an ardent Free-trader, pronounced condemnation upon the Anti-Corn-Law League. Fresh from his French studies, horror-struck at the evils which the Jacobin club, gradually drawing to itself, like a huge cancer in the body politic, all the authority which belonged of right to the deputies of the people, had brought upon France, he saw in the Anti-Corn-Law League an organised attempt to control Parliament and usurp functions which the nation had committed to its representatives. But if, at the time when the League was constituted, proof was still required that such an organisation could exist without imperilling representative institutions or betraying the remotest affinity for the revolutionary societies of the Continent, the proof was convincingly given by the history of its operations. And very much more than this was proved; to wit, that the ponderous machinery of our parliamentary institutions may be influenced in a highly beneficial manner by having the hot-blast of national opinion brought to bear upon them in concentrated volume by associations formed for the purpose out of doors. The magnificent success of the Anti-Corn-Law League shows what great things a loyal and organised appeal to public opinion may accomplish in England.

The honour of having effectually promoted the Anti-Corn-Law League does not, of course, belong exclusively to Cobden. At least one other name, that of Mr. Bright, will for ever be associated with his in the history of the society, and there were several others who in zeal and distinction were surpassed but by these two. It has, however, been acknowledged by the suffrage of England and the world that the Anti-Corn-Law League bore pre-eminently the image and superscription of Richard Cobden. It was animated by that deep,



resolute, invincible enthusiasm, mild in manner, unquenchable in intensity of hidden fire, which characterised him, an enthusiasm becoming grave men, whose feelings rested on a substratum of thought. That definiteness of purpose, that unity of aim, which contributed so materially to its success, was incarnated in Cobden. He was content to be a man of one idea until that idea was converted into a fact. When he entered Parliament, as he did in 1841 for Stockport, he professed that he had come there first of all to agitate for the repeal of the Corn Laws, and at this object he kept hammering, hammering, hammering, till he sent the nail home. His own intellect had felt the persuasive influence of Smith's reasonings, and the logic which he had himself experienced to be irresistible he brought to bear with frank confidence upon the minds of others. Armed with his logic, Cobden would go anywhere. If only people would hear him, he was sure that they would not strike him. Accordingly he delighted to beard the old British lion of Protection in his den, that is to say, in the market-places of county towns. The Protection papers might hint that it would be well to brick-bat him, the farmers might be in a suspicious or furious mood; never mind; only let Cobden get on a stall or a stump, show them his good-humoured, manly, gentle face, induce them for two minutes to open their ears while his drilled armies of fact and syllogism bore down upon them, and all the entrenchments of prejudice and misconception with which the fortress of Protection had been guarded in their brain gave way, and their assent to Free-trade was won as by a charge of bayonets. Nor was it only the bucolic mind of England that owned the power of Cobden's logic. It was pointedly referred to by Sir Robert Peel as having influenced him in his abandonment of Protection; and the man who achieved greatness by assailing Peel for adopting Free-trade declared that, as a logician, Cobden was close and compact, adroit, acute, and perhaps even subtle. As an orator Mr. Bright surpassed Mr. Cobden, but as a logician Mr. Cobden had no rival in the ranks of the League.

There were of necessity some aspects of the League's operations which might not strike an observer as dignified: Money had to be raised, and the usual apparatus of subscription lists, fancy bazaars, and the rest, was brought into play. It does not seem possible to rid these things of a tincture of humbug, but the work of the world is not done by persons of fastidious delicacy, and hard as is the fate of each of us in being compelled to eat our peck of dirt, we have this consolation that, without the unromantic mixture, our victuals would certainly have done us less good. Nature, let Professor Tyndall say what he likes, does not intend us to wear cotton respirators, and breathe an air as pure as that which bathes the summit of Mont Blanc. The bazaars, with their ingenious method of raising pence and sixpences, their coaxing

saleswomen, and so forth, were not altogether pleasing phenomena, and are redeemed only by the consideration that they brought many thousand pounds into the exchequer of the League, and contributed in their own way to diffuse its principles. Nor can it be disputed that the oratory of the paid lecturers of the association was not always refined in style or scrupulously fair in spirit. A peripatetic lecturer will make use of arguments and similitudes which tell upon his audience, and will carry about with him a very large brush and two pots well filled with paint, the one with white, the other with black, for the respective execution of portraits of friend and foe. "Thought sculptured in language," a good definition of the address in which a Cæsar might instruct and animate his soldiers, has never been a true description of popular oratory, even when it appealed to the better class of audiences. The landlords of the League platform, the "Sabine tillers" who sent their brethren to die in battle abroad, and forced corn up to famine prices at home, solely in order that their rents might rise, were as unreal as the ogres of the picture books.

"Year after year they voted cent. per cent. ;  
 Blood, sweat, and tear-wrung millions! Why? for rent!  
 And will they not repay the treasures lent?  
 No! down with everything, and up with rent!  
 Their good, ill, health, wealth, joy, or discontent,  
 Being, end, aim, religion,—rent, rent, rent!"

This kind of thing is very detestable. To represent the land-owners of England as selfish and sordid miscreants, was to do the grossest injustice to men who, in courtesy and generosity, have been equal to any class in the community, and whose most grasping, narrow, and coarse-minded representatives are without question, not those who have grown up in the shadow of ancestral trees, but those new men who, having acquired fortunes by trade, have turned their guineas into estates. But it is a safe assertion that the wildest extravagances of the League platform were mild compared with those which have generally been indulged in by political agitators. Whatever may have been the case with subalterns, the leading speakers in the civic conflict with the Corn Laws were incomparably more just in feeling and temperate in speech than, for example, O'Connell in his contemporary agitation for Repeal. Stern, close logic was recognised as, on the whole, a characteristic of League advocacy, and this reputation it owed in great measure to Cobden. In the energy of its operations, also, we can trace the influence of his prompt, wakeful, and decisive mind,—in its millions of publications, its organised army of lecturers, its sustained cannonade of public meetings. Cobden was essentially a middle-class man, and the agitation conducted by the Anti-Corn-Law League was distinctively a middle-class agitation. The mob orators of the time,—O'Connor and his myrmidons, with the entire crew of

Chartists and revolutionists,—looked askance upon Free-trade; and Cobden and his friends never condescended to manifest any sympathy with their movements. Wealthy merchants and successful tradesmen formed the majority of the League membership, and Cobden seems, from his glowing reference to the circumstance in his first parliamentary speech, to have regarded with special satisfaction the adhesion of upwards of two thousand ministers of religion of all denominations to the crusade against the Corn Laws. "Those laws," said Cobden, "had been tested by the immutable morality of Scripture. Those reverend gentlemen had prepared and signed a petition, in which they prayed the removal of those laws,—laws which, they stated, violated the Scriptures, and prevented famishing men from having a portion of those fatherly bounties which were intended for all people; and he would remind honourable gentlemen that, besides these 650 ministers,—who had met in conference on the subject,—there were 1,500 others from whom letters had been received, offering up their prayers in the several localities to incline the will of Him who ruled princes and potentates to turn your hearts to justice and mercy. . . . Englishmen had a respect for rank, for wealth, perhaps too much; they felt an attachment to the laws of their country; but there was another attribute in the minds of Englishmen; there was a permanent veneration for sacred things; and where their sympathy and respect and deference are enlisted in what they believe to be a good cause, you and yours will vanish like chaff before the whirlwind."

It is well known that, powerfully as the exertions of the Leaguers contributed to the repeal of the Corn Laws, that event was not brought about solely through their efforts. No reasonable doubt, it is true, can be entertained that Peel had been convinced of the impolicy of Protection, and had adopted the fundamental principles of Free-trade before the autumn of 1845; and it is almost equally certain that no long time would have elapsed before he would have attempted to carry out that revolution in our commercial and fiscal legislation, in which he gave up to mankind what he owed to party. But if the disastrous weather of 1845 and the appearance of the potato blight had not startled all men with apprehensions of insurrection and famine, not even the alliance of Peel and the League would have secured, in 1846, the repeal of the Corn Laws. It seems to be a law of human affairs that great changes are submitted to, great improvements effected, not without the spur of necessity. It took a French Revolution to rectify the European system,—to shake from it the cerements of feudalism, and open its veins to the blood of a new time; it took the frown of impending famine to render possible the abandonment of Protection by the British Legislature. In both these instances the need there was for comprehensive and deep reform had been conclusively made out;

but the impulse of necessity,—the shake to the vase of water, already below freezing-point, which makes it crystallise in a moment,—was indispensable in each. The recognition of the historical fact that the potato blight of 1845, and the generally defective harvest of the year, co-operated with the League in procuring the abolition of the Corn Laws, does not require us to admit that Cobden and his brethren performed less than a most important service to their country. It is to them we owe it that the legislation of 1846 was not the mere expedient by which a temporary emergency was met, but the inauguration of a new era in the policy and prosperity of England. The nation was prepared for Free-trade, and once the step from Protection had been taken, that preparation made it irreversible. The thought of Adam Smith, the energy, the tact, the blended impetuosity and persistence of Cobden, these revolutionised the commercial policy of England. "The name," said Peel, in reference to his Acts repealing the Corn Laws, "which ought to be chiefly associated with the success of these measures, is the name of Richard Cobden."

No act of the League was more graceful than that with which it closed its career. Having played its natural and salutary part in the constitutional system of the country,—having seen the work accomplished, to achieve which an extraordinary machinery had been called into existence,—it decreed its own dissolution. It was at a meeting held in Manchester that this resolution was adopted, and we can well believe that, as Mr. Prentice states in his history, "an air of grave solemnity spread over the meeting as it drew to a close." As Peel had done justice to Cobden, Cobden took this opportunity of paying a tribute to Peel. "If he has lost office,"—these were Cobden's words,—"*he has gained a country.* For my part, I would rather descend into private life with that last measure of his, which led to his discomfiture, in my hand, than mount to the highest pinnacle of human power."

On this whole matter of Free-trade and Protection, three brief remarks may be made. In the first place, it is unjust to the Protectionists to allege either that their motive was purely selfish, or that their argumentation was entirely absurd. There was probably just about as much, just about as little, public spirit in their ranks as there has generally been in those of political parties, and it would not be too generous to say that a majority of them believed that, in defending Protection, they were playing the part of true patriots. Nor was it absurd to maintain that, granting the enhancement of the price of corn by Protection to have been, in the first instance, artificial and impolitic, a certain degree of caution, of delay, of graduation, might be necessary in returning to natural courses. Still more plausibly could it be affirmed that it is desirable for a country to be able to grow corn enough for the consumption of its population, so that, in case of war, it may not be at the mercy

of its enemies. In the second place, it is hardly fair in Englishmen to boast over other nations on the strength of its free trade. Great Britain is without question better prepared by nature for the adoption of this policy than any other nation of the Old World, better, perhaps, even than the great Republic herself. Taking agriculture in its two great branches,—corn-growing and stock-feeding,—we shall find that no portion of European territory, equal in superficies to that of the British Islands, is fitted to produce food for man at once so large in quantity and so high in quality; and a moment's reflection upon our treasures of coal and iron will demonstrate that, in respect of manufacturing industry, our natural advantages are superior to those of any other European people. It was bold in England,—it was, perhaps, the most splendid example of civic courage presented by history,—to step into the arena and throw down her gage to all the world in the conflict of industry; but it was a less daring act on the part of England than it would have been on that of other nations, and we cannot, with a good grace, either boast of ourselves or exult scornfully over them. In the third place, it would not be easy to exaggerate the advantage derived by this country from the inauguration of a free-trade policy, or the importance of the lesson she has thus read to the world. English agriculture never prospered as it has prospered since English farmers were compelled to face the competition of mankind. In quantity, they hold, in ordinary seasons, their own against the foreigner; in quality, they are supreme. Every step in the development of free trade has brought a universal war, that bugbear of Protectionists, nearer to absolute impossibility; and in any war short of universal, our customers will find means of carrying their goods to our markets. We had no difficulty in feeding with Russian corn the troops that took Sebastopol. Greeks, Prussians, Austrians, had access to Russian markets; and with Austrians, Prussians, and Greeks, we could deal. It is practically impossible that this should cease to be the case. Even if Europe were utterly shut to us, America would remain open, and vice versâ. No statesman is required to make provision for a contingency which would involve a conspiracy of the human race against his country. To defend Protection while we had it was pardonable; to return to Protection after the experience we have had of the reality of its advantages and the visionary nature of its perils would be insane. It will put us to our metal. Only with our loins girt and our lamps burning, only by sleepless vigilance and indefatigable energy, can we match our island against the world; nothing that owes its strength to artifice, nothing that is not native to the soil, nothing that God and Nature do not intend to grow in England, can live; particular interests, do we what we may, will at times suffer; but under these conditions our material prosperity will maintain itself until the fertility of our soil is exhausted, and the last coal has been dug from our mines.

As a "thrifty, painstaking calico-printer," to use his own expression, Cobden had become a man of fortune; but even calico-printing requires close and hearty attention, and the heart of Cobden had for many years throbbed with one supreme ambition,—that of opening the markets of England to the corn of the world. The triumph of free trade accordingly found him what the world would call a ruined man. So alarming to himself, a short time previously, had the prospect been, that it was only through the urgent representations of Mr. Bright that he was deterred from relaxing in the work of political agitation, and engaging once more with all his might in business. When, therefore, the service to his country for which he had sacrificed his own prospects of wealth had been done, the leading Free-traders thought it their duty to secure, first, that he should not suffer pecuniary inconvenience on account of his zeal for the public advantage, and secondly, that he should not be under the necessity of withdrawing from political activity, with a view to retrieving his fortunes. They raised a sum of £80,000, and presented it to him. With part of it was bought the farm on which he had passed his boyish years, and there he henceforward resided. As it was understood that the investment by Cobden of a large part of the money did not turn out well, some of his friends subsequently made up a purse of £40,000, with the intention of offering it to him; but so soon as he heard of the proposal, he stamped it out. He was asked by Lord John Russell to take office in the Whig Ministry, installed after the revolt of the Tory party from Peel; but he declined the offer, and travelled for some time on the Continent to recruit his health. He was now known throughout Europe as the champion of Free-trade, and wherever he came,—in France, Germany, Russia, Italy,—he was received with acclamations. At the general election, which occurred in his absence, he was returned both for Stockport and the West Riding, and elected to sit for the latter.

Before the settlement of the Free-trade controversy, a question had come up in Parliament which deeply excited the mind of the country, and on which public men were compelled to pronounce with decision. Lord Ashley and other eminent philanthropists urged the Legislature to regulate labour in factories, and introduced for that purpose the Ten Hours' Bill. Mr. Cobden declared himself opposed to it, standing resolutely to what he considered the orthodox view of economists, that employers and employed should be left to arrange between them the terms of their agreement. Experience has abundantly shown that the Factories Act, with its limitation of the hours of work for women and children, has been a blessing to all concerned. Against this demonstration no theoretic objections to the measure could weigh much; but in truth the theory of our factory legislation is as sound as its working has been beneficial. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, impressed with the evil wrought by the Corn Laws, decided

that legislative interference was in all cases, save those of positive criminality, to be deprecated. Men, they maintained, could be trusted to understand their own interests, and it was the interest of masters to deal fairly with their servants. In point of fact, there is no form of relationship which requires more careful regulation by Governments, than that between the employer and those he employs, the latter being liable to be injuriously handled, first through the employer's cupidity, and secondly by means of their own, acting in co-operation with his. Enlightened self-interest, doubtless, would secure justice to the employed, but self-interest is not always enlightened. So far, however, is it from the truth to say that Cobden and Bright opposed the Ten Hours' Bill from indifference to the welfare of working men, that one influential reason for their conduct was that their own treatment of their workpeople was unexceptionable, nay, exemplary;—and that they believed that other masters might be trusted as well as they.

A discrepancy between the opinion of Cobden and that of the great majority of his countrymen, appeared in connection with the peace movement. He held, first, that England ought not to interfere in Continental disputes, and secondly, that nations in general ought to settle their disputes by arbitration. The peace views of Cobden were due, partly to his tender and kindly disposition, and partly to his comprehensive and enthusiastic acceptance of the doctrine that Government interference is likely to lead to mischief. During the whole period of the Anti-Corn-Law agitation, the thought of the benefit which nations confer upon each other when they act in harmony, and of the mischief which arises from their severance, was present to his mind. The triumph of Free-trade had been delightful to him, principally because he believed that extended commerce would mean the extension of mutual understanding and goodwill between nations, and the recognition by all that it is their interest to be friends. It must be granted that there was something in Cobden's views on these points which jarred upon the instincts of the English people. It was felt, more or less consciously, that his confidence in enlightened self-interest was too great. Interest, in the factory, was to take the place of justice and mercy in guarding the woman and the child; interest was to supersede honour in the councils of nations. Arithmetic was invoked to settle questions in relation to which it had not been previously thought of. "The hundred days of Napoleon," writes Mr. Cobden, "cost us forty millions, the interest of which, at five per cent., is two millions. Now, our exports to all Europe of British manufactures amount to about eighteen millions annually; and taking the profit at ten per cent., it falls short of two millions. So that all the profit of all our merchants, trading with all Europe, will not yield sufficient to pay the yearly interest of the cost of the last one hundred days' war on the Continent, leaving all the other hundreds of millions spent



previously as so much dead loss." This looks like putting the conscience of the nation into its breeches-pocket, and bidding it, unless it can speak thence, to be silent. On the whole, it must be declared that the duty and honour of nations cannot be statistically defined or arithmetically computed.

Nor can it be hoped with any considerable confidence that the substitution of arbitration for war, as the method by which nations shall settle their disputes, will take place. Either the practical circumspection or the logic of Cobden failed him in this instance. The question, Who is to arbitrate between nations? proves to be unanswerable. The arbitration would be either between weak nations or between strong. If two weak nations were disposed to quarrel, and the strong nations insisted upon their having recourse to arbitration, the strong nations would have to choose between letting them fight the matter out and forcing them to accept arbitration,—in other words, going to war with them. If the nations were strong, what Court of Arbitration could compel them to bridle their passions? If the lion and the tiger are seriously incensed against each other, which of the animals will persuade them not to fight? Arbitration already settles all questions except those which touch, in what is held to be a vital point, on the honour, interest, or independence of nations. To say that two nations are about to engage in hostilities is equivalent to saying that they have refused to entertain the idea of arbitration; and if you will force them to entertain it, you at once have war. An effectual Court of Arbitration in European disputes would be the supreme power in Europe. If, therefore, we attempt to convert into a definite fact, with local habitation and name, the proposal of the Peace Society, that arbitration shall be substituted for war in all national disputes, we shall find the scheme impracticable. On the other hand, the eloquent exhibition of the sins and miseries of war tends to predispose nations to avoid an appeal to the sword, and to have recourse to arbitration. A wide field is thus opened up, and one in which good service has been done, and may yet be done, for mankind. Cobden, and the more intelligent apostles of peace, deserve credit for the energy and success with which they tore the glittering mask from the face of war and showed the grisly horrors beneath. The barbarism of conquest, the hollowness of military glory, the honour due to peaceful industry, the beneficence of justice, candour, and magnanimity, when they command back into the scabbard the sword unsheathed for war, were preached by these men with very serious effect. The pity is that, though people are not unwilling to take this view when it is expressly and lucidly set before them, the martial instincts, the battle sympathies, are so powerful among the robust nations of Europe that the man who can lead one of them to victory succeeds on the instant in intoxicating it with pride and

exultation. When the sword of Napoleon gleamed along the Lombard hills, and Frenchmen saw the trophies of Lodi and Arcola, the memories of the Republic faded from their minds, and they were prepared to hail the general of the army of Italy as the despot of France. Bismarck and King William contended with the Prussian Parliament for ten years, and of their contendings there was no prospect of an end; but when Prussian soldiers stormed Düppel, and still more when Prussian soldiers won Sadowa, the Germans rose to the highest pitch of warlike enthusiasm, and were in a mood to push forward to the conquest of Europe. We are not likely to have too powerful an advocacy of peace.

The last public service to which Cobden devoted his energies was the negotiation of the French treaty. The ability displayed on this occasion has been acknowledged on all hands; and it seems not improbable that the conclusion of the treaty may prove the first step towards the comprehensive adoption of Free-trade principles in France. On completing this work he was offered by Lord Palmerston a baronetcy and a place in the Privy Council. He declined both. Neither before nor after could he be induced to take office, or to accept of any boon from Government. Having sacrificed his private prospects in the Anti-Corn Law agitation, he accepted the compensation to which justice entitled him; but beyond what his duty to himself and his family imperatively required him to take, he would take nothing, and to this resolution he scrupulously adhered.

Had he been alive and in vigour at the time when Mr. Bright accepted office under Mr. Gladstone, it is probable that he would have done likewise; but he felt that there was too great discrepancy between his political views and those of the old Whig cabinets, whether under the Russell or the Palmerston leadership, to permit him to take office with them. He died in the spring of 1865. In the House of Commons, in every part of England, throughout Europe and America, the amount of feeling displayed on the occasion was exceptional and striking. Statesmen at the head of rival parties,—statesmen with whom his public life had been an almost continuous conflict,—vied with each other in expressing their sense of the services he had rendered to his country. The Emperor of France, speaking through the lips of his minister, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, paid the tribute of an extraordinary dispatch to his memory. Eminent foreign writers extolled him as the reconciler of nations, the citizen of the world, the worker out, on the basis of common sense and common interest, of the brotherhood of mankind. Not inconsistently with this view was the stress which both they and writers at home laid upon his thorough nationality, upon his typical character as an Englishman. The quiet resolution, the moral courage, the unflagging energy, the perseverance, the solid ability, which have made the middle class in England what it is, were declared on all hands to have been

illustriously represented by Cobden. His personal friends, and they were many, spoke of him as the "gentlest and manliest of human beings," one in whom, under an unimpassioned exterior, lay all delicacy, chivalry, magnanimity.

There was nothing in Cobden's personal appearance to distinguish him from an ordinary English gentleman. Throughout his whole career he retained that quietness of demeanour which surprised his early associates in the Anti-Corn Law League. When you saw him, the suggestion of your mind was, whatever that man may be, he cannot be a popular agitator. Perfect simplicity clothed his greatness, and as some, according to the poet, must be known before they seem worthy of love, so it was only when he was rightly known that his intellectual power was recognised and his moral majesty apprehended. It was not easy to realise that, under that pensive mildness, there lay a strength as of adamant, a keenness as of flame. Yet so it was. Never, either intellectually or morally, was man more inflexible. Convinced that the Corn Laws were a source of calamity to England, he concentrated the energies of his soul into one burning passion of opposition to them, and rested not until they were destroyed. Convinced that the foreign policy of Great Britain, as represented by Lord Palmerston, was unworthy of a great nation,—proud to the weak, and word-valiant to the strong; degrading when it dealt with Greek or Chinese authorities, dangerous or ridiculous when it sent hectoring dispatches to Russia or France; frivolous in its vauntings of sympathy for constitutional freedom, half-hearted, if not false, to genuine patriots, Hungarian or other, with swords in their hands,—he repelled every advance made by Palmerston with implacable persistence. If he seemed churlish, he cared not; he obeyed his conscience. We do not say that in this he was without error. We are mindful that much, very much, is to be said on the side of Lord Palmerston, and that Cobden acknowledged that Palmerston had been a noble antagonist. We are merely pointing out that moral inflexibility, equal to that of an old Roman or of a Puritan soldier, dwelt in the breast of Cobden. There was also a flash of fierce indignation in him, which injustice to a friend called in a moment from beneath its snow-calm envelope. It was in actual fury that he rushed at Mr. Delane, when the "Times" charged Mr. Bright with preaching spoliation. Gentleness was the habit of his mind, but it was justly said that for him apathy was sin. One thinks with pleasure of the comparative repose of his last days, of his cordial relations with the inhabitants of his native parish, of the dutiful attention which he paid to parish affairs, and of the delight he took in being kind to the animals on his farm. Deep sadness for the loss of his son clouded the evening of his life; but nothing could destroy the serenity of his courage, or the piety and patience and priest-like elevation of his character.

## A FAREWELL.

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### I.

To part in midmost summer of our love,  
When first the flower-scents and the linnet's tune  
Have fallen into harmonies of June  
About our lives new-linked, and all above  
The flower-blue heaven lies for bliss aswoon,—  
Were this not sad? Yet love must live by pain,  
If one would win its fragrance to remain.

### II.

Were it not sadder, in the years to come,  
To feel the hand-clasp slacken for long use,  
The untuned heartstrings for long stress refuse  
To yield old harmonies, the songs grow dumb  
For weariness, and all the old spells lose  
The first enchantment? Yet this thing must be.  
Love is but mortal, save in memory.

### III.

Too rare a flower it is, its bloom to keep  
In the raw cold of our unlovely clime,  
Too frail to thrive in this our weary time.  
I would not have thy kisses, sweet, grow cheap,  
Nor thy dear looks round out an idle rhyme,—  
And so I hold that we loose hands and part;  
Dear, with my hand you do not loose my heart.

### IV.

Sweet is the fragrance of remembered love;  
The memory of clasped hands is very sweet,  
Joined hands that did not once too often meet  
And never knew that saddest word "Enough!"  
And so 'tis well that, ere our springtime fleet,  
Thus in the heyday of our love part we:  
Farewell, and all white omens go with thee!

## V.

Is it not well that we should both retain  
The early bloom of love, untouched and pure ?  
There is no way by which it may endure,  
Save if we part before its sweetness wane  
And wither ; since that life is so impure,  
And love so frail, it may not blossom long,  
Unscathed, amid our stress of care and wrong.

## VI.

We were not sure of love, my sweet,—and yet  
The fragrance of its Spring shall never die.  
Sweetheart, we shall be sure of memory,  
That amber of the years, where Time does set  
The dear-beloved shapes of things gone by,  
Whereby their gentle semblance may evade  
The ills that lurk in eld's ungenial shade.

## VII.

So, sweet, our love shall, in the death of it,  
Revive, as corn that withers in the ground.  
And somehow after casts fresh blades around  
And yields full golden sheavage, as is fit.  
It may be that new flowers will too be found  
Among the stubble, and the pale sweet blooms  
Of Autumn glorify our woodland glooms.

## VIII.

The memory of our kisses shall survive,  
And in the glass of time be consecrate.  
Our love shall with the distance grow more great,  
And shall for us be sweeter than alive,  
When dead ; for memory shall reduplicate  
The sweetness of the past, till you and I  
Cherish as angels' food each bygone sigh.

J. P.

## "PRIVATE."

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THERE is perhaps no word in the English language subject to greater abuse than that which we have prefixed to this short essay. It is supposed to have, and has, a very considerable power; and that power is used with the greatest freedom by people who are the least entitled to the privilege which they assume. And very much of the reality of this power it has acquired by the extent of its pretensions. Were it not so, the matter would not be worth the notice which we now give to it. But the word does prevail as it is intended to prevail, and is allowed to have much of that conjuring capability which is ascribed to it, because men are thoughtless, and do not take the trouble of analysing the injunctions which are put upon them, and of inquiring what is the nature of the authority by which they permit themselves to be controlled. We receive letters from day to day,—you, and I, and all of us who are concerned in the affairs of men and women,—on which the word "private" is written in such manner as to obtain quick observation, and we do consider ourselves to be in some special way bound to obey the order thus conveyed to us. We conceive that we are not entitled to use the contents of that letter in accordance with our own freer judgment, as we might have done had not that embargo been laid upon us by the writer. And we are thus violently restrained without, for the most part, inquiry on our own part as to the right of our correspondent to exercise this authority over us. This has become so general,—this belief in the word has grown so much into usage,—that men consider themselves to be armed with an unanswerable complaint, with complaint as against an offender who has put himself out of all courts, when the privacy thus demanded is infringed. "He has divulged that which has been communicated to him under the seal of privacy," the indignant one will say, pointing the finger of scorn at the transgressor. And those who look on and listen will acknowledge that a trespass has been committed, and will feel that he who has broken the faith required of him here, has in some degree impaired his character as a gentleman. We hold that the word has no authority whatsoever, whether written or spoken, over any communication, unless that authority has been conveyed from other sources, and by other means. We assert that the writing of "private" on a communication has no potency whatever, unless that potency be derived from special agreement between the writer and the receiver. It may well be that one man in writing or speaking to another may be justified in demanding privacy, and that great fault will be committed if that privacy be not

observed ; but the right to demand that privacy cannot be obtained simply by a written or a spoken word.

The mistake to which we refer applies, of course, chiefly to written communications. In regard to those which are made from mouth to ear, the request for secrecy is probably put forth in advance, and if the promise be given, it is, of course, binding. If we require from you, before we tell you our secret, an assurance that you will not repeat it, and if we obtain that assurance, we are armed with a certain right to your faith. You were, at any rate, enabled to use some judgment of your own before you promised,—and if you erred in judgment the punishment, such as it may be, must fall upon that fault. But the peculiar evil of which we are speaking rarely attaches itself to spoken communications. The man or woman who comes to us with a secret, demanding promises of secrecy, is not the sinner with whom we are now dealing. We are not sure that we are very fond of such proffered secrets, and when they come our way we make sad mistakes as to that which may and that which may not be revealed ;—but for the most part they are innocent, and it seldom happens that mala fides is to be discovered in the original owners of them. But we own to strong suspicion when a letter reaches us with the word "private" at the beginning of it,—unless there exist between us and the writer some true and acknowledged bond of privacy. We generally find that where that bond does exist the word is unnecessary, and is not used. In such correspondence the recipient of the letter probably knows the necessity for privacy without the written caution.

The power which the word undoubtedly does possess has arisen from a feeling among men which is very general,—and very laudable. They wish to be gentlemen. And it is the same with women, for they wish to be ladies. To be faithful is supposed to be the distinguishing mark of gentleness. We will not say that gentlemen, so called, tell fewer lies than men who are not gentle ; but to lie is supposed to be a disgrace especially damnable to one who assumes gentle bearing ; while other faults, much as they may require amendment, grievous as they may be in other respects, are not held to be so directly antagonistic as is the fault of lying to the character of which we are speaking. It is assumed that a gentleman speaks the truth,—so assumed even when he is known to be the biggest liar of his day,—and, therefore, that he is faithful. He will not say the thing which by his faith he is bound not to say ; and, therefore, when privacy is demanded of him he will be "private." It is thus, we think, that the thing has grown ; and men who, in truth, are gentlemen,—men, too, who are educated, and who should understand the why and the wherefore in every command which is allowed by them to be authoritative,—do permit themselves to be constrained by an injunction which should have no moral power whatever, and which is usually used for an evil purpose. If any man accustomed to a wide correspondence will cast his mind back on such letters as he has



received with the word "private" written on them, he will probably find that, as regards most of them, the injunction came from some writer not justified in giving it. The fault is not committed by those who are right-minded; but, when committed by those who are wrong-minded, it is admitted by their superiors in conduct and feeling. It is against this admission that we now enter our protest.

No doubt the word has its legitimate use,—or, we may say, uses. Probably that which is most general and most legitimate is brought to bear when the writer intends to divest his communication of certain formal attributes which might otherwise be presumed to belong to it. When so applied, the word binds the writer rather than the receiver of the letter, and in this way can have no false pretension. "This which I now say to you,—take it for what it is worth, and use it as best you may, but it shall not be brought up against you by me, as might a letter more formal in its character." Many of us have received and some of us have written letters marked "private" in that sense; and whether the judgment of the writer may have been good or bad, the intention has been pure, and no mala fides can have been present to the writer's mind. Such letters are common in official life, and must be common wherever authority exists. Such pass no doubt daily from bishops to their clergymen, and from ministers of state to their subordinates. But the tendency of the word in these cases is to relax rather than to exert authority.

And the word may undoubtedly be of great and legitimate service in that sense in which it is so often mis-used. There are many phases of life in which a writer is amply entitled to demand privacy from his correspondent. A husband may do so from his wife, or a wife from her husband;—a client may do so from his lawyer;—a master in some cases from his servant;—a friend may often do so from a friend. Indeed, no list or catalogue of such cases can be made. But the bond for faith must depend on something much stronger than the written word, and judgment for breach of faith, if ever given, must be founded on other evidence than that which the word itself conveys. There must have been some pact or contract, expressed or understood, between the correspondents, before the word should be allowed to receive any of that force which is commonly attached to it. No man can make out such catalogue even for his own guidance; but every man, ordinarily gifted with sense and feeling, should know whether in this or in that case the obligation exists for him.

The power which the abuse of the word confers is most deleterious. The writer desires for his own purposes to impregnate the mind of his correspondent with the knowledge of certain facts, being aware that the existence of such knowledge in that man's mind will be, or may be, to his advantage. But that diffused knowledge may also be to his disadvantage, unless it be in some degree under his own control after it be in the possession of that other man. Therefore he writes the word "private" on his letter, and feels that

he has achieved his object. The recipient of the letter, not analysing the matter, having been taught by the practice of the world around him that the word is endowed with some conjuring, *hocus-pocus* authority against which he dare not rebel,—because he wishes to be thought a gentleman,—submits to the thralldom, and confesses himself to be bound by a compact to the making of which he himself has been no party. He has opened and used the letter. The word "private" has been put upon him, like the touch of a bailiff on a debtor's shoulder, and he has no escape. And what has his ungracious correspondent imparted to him? This unwelcome correspondent has communicated to him some secret, in the secrecy of which he has no concern; some matter which he knows it would be better that he should not keep secret were his judgment left unfettered. The man has perhaps confessed same fault of his own, or has for his own purpose stated evidence which, if followed up, would prove a fault; or he has communicated an order for which he does not choose to be held responsible; or he has put forth an excuse which he thinks may be valid with his correspondent, though he knows that it would be torn to rags were it allowed to go further;—or he has maligned an enemy or perhaps traduced a friend. In official life that word, which may be so kindly beneficial when it is used to lessen the authority of the writer, is often damnably injurious when it is adopted for the purpose of exercising a bastard authority. The superior desires to impose an obligation on an inferior, but will not maintain before the light of day the order which he gives. He therefore writes his order on note paper, prefixes to it the word "private," and has achieved his object. This he probably does without being aware that he has been guilty of a fraud. The custom of the world is on his side. The word is there ready for his use,—and he uses it. We think that he would not use it if in truth he understood what it is to be a gentleman.

Possibly an extreme instance of the absurdity of the attempt so to bind a man may best explain our meaning. We take it into our heads that it will be a good thing to destroy the Houses of Parliament,—all the Lords and Commons that is,—and we invent our plot. But the aid of some friendly chemist is necessary. So we write to a friendly chemist, telling him of our project to fill the ventilating chambers of the two Houses with air of strychnine, and request him to supply us with the materials. We then call his attention to the word "private," with which we have commenced our letter; and observe, that in the event of his disapproving our project, of course he will not say a word on the subject to any human being. So potent is the conjuring spell of which we have spoken, that we can almost fancy the existence of a chemist who would feel himself constrained to silence. From day to day men make "private" communications not so startling, but almost equally disreputable, as to which they expect that their injunctions as to secrecy will be held to be sacred. And they are held to be sacred.

All secrecy is injurious in its nature. We do not mean to aver that men and women can live without those episodes in their affairs which require privacy. Where is the man who can boast that he is altogether free from the presence of a skeleton in his cupboard? But the fewer that we have of these grinning inmates the better will it be for ourselves and all those who are concerned with us. A secret, if we think of it, has ever some quality of the skeleton. It is to us a secret, because the divulging of it would be injurious to us. It is kept hallowed, not because it is a joy, but because it might become a pain. No doubt there is an excitement about a secret,—a secret so called,—which may to some extent be pleasurable. The knowledge of that which is unknown to others has an allurements. But such pleasure is a poor trifle, and stands quite apart from the general good or evil of secrecy in the affairs of life. And there is a secrecy,—which is rather reticence than secrecy, which is born of modesty and can hurt no possessor of it. It is this feeling which induces us to be silent on our own affairs, because to tell them aloud to the world around us would be an impertinence. A man does not speak to every one he meets in the street of his balance at the banker's, or of his wife's excellence, or his own hopes and fears in regard to Saving Grace. He has certain reticences which he believes to be wholesome, but which are not kept as secrets because to divulge them would be dangerous or injurious. Any secret kept for that reason,—and we all have such secrets,—is surely a burden, and a sorrow, and a skeleton in the cupboard which may come forth some day and grin at us before our friends.

The less of secrecy we have in our lives the better. He who has none, though he may suffer sorrow, is free from that fear of his fellow men which is the worst of suffering. But the friend, or acquaintance, or stranger, who sends us a letter and writes "private" on the top of it, attempts to impose upon us an added burden, a new secret, another weight, from the bearing of which, in nine cases out of ten, no advantage can accrue to ourselves. There are those attached to most of us, for whom to bear such burdens is the sweetest privilege of our existence. He who has no compact, written or unwritten, with any friend, rendering himself liable to such obligation, is indeed to be pitied. To be subject to no call for private aid can only be the lot of him who can make no claim for private aid on his own behalf. Such a one must be fatherless, childless, wifeless, brotherless, and friendless. But before we admit the claim it will at least be well to consider the position of the claimant, and to ask ourselves whether he has a right to demand from us that we should bear this load which he seeks to impose upon us. If he have no such right, bestowed upon him by previous mutual engagement, we hold that he cannot establish it by writing the word "private" either on the inside or the outside of a letter.

## OUTWARD BOUND.

(HORACE, III. 7.)

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"Quid fles, Asterie, quem tibi candidi  
Primo restituent vero Favonii—  
Gygen?"

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COME, Laura, patience. Time and spring  
Your absent Arthur back shall bring,  
Enriched with many an Indian thing,  
Once more to woo you ;  
No storm can shake his constant mind,  
Who, 'neath the "Simla's" deck reclined,  
Still racks his sleepless brains to find  
New verses to you.

Would it were wind and wave alone !—  
The terrors of the torrid zone,  
The indiscriminate cyclone,  
A man might parry ;  
But only faith, or "triple brass,"  
Can help the outward-bound to pass  
Safe through that eastward-faring class  
Who sail to marry.

For him fond mothers, stout and fair,  
Ascend the tortuous cabin stair  
Only to hold around his chair  
Admiring sessions ;  
For him the eyes of daughters droop  
Across the plate of handed soup,  
Suggesting seats upon the poop,  
And soft confessions.

Nor are these all his pains, nor most.  
Romancing captains cease to boast,  
Loud majors leave piquet, to roast  
The youthful griffin.  
All, all in genial colours show  
His fate,—“remote, unfriended, slow,”—  
His “melancholy” bungalow  
His lonely tiffin.

In vain. · Unmoved at last as first,  
In bland endurance deeply versed,  
Your "blameless Arthur" hears rehearsed

    The woes that wait him ;  
Nought can subdue his soul secure ;  
"Arthur will come again," be sure,  
Though matron shrewd and maid demure  
    Move worlds to mate him.

But, Laura, on your side, forbear  
To greet with too impressed an air  
A certain youth with chesnut hair,—

    A youth unstable ;  
Albeit none more skilled can guide  
The frail outrigger down the tide,  
Or, trimmer-footed, lighter glide  
    Through "Guards'" or "Mabel."

Be warned in time. Without a trace  
Of acquiescence on your face,  
Hear, in the waltz's breathing space,

    His airy patter ;  
Avoid the confidential nook ;  
If, when you sing, you find his look  
Grow tender, close your music-book,  
    And end the matter.

A. D.

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## MICHAEL FARADAY.

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A COLLECTION of Michael Faraday's letters, carefully selected and well arranged by Dr. Bence Jones, affords the opportunity to those who know how to use it, of studying the ways of thought, the ways of life, the intellectual and the moral character of a man who, from every point of view, was truly great. He could not be too closely approached. There were no shabby places or ugly corners in his mind; the ascendancy of his genius was the more complete because of the virtues which were developed with it; and though he chanced to be the citizen of a country little disposed to honour the scientific discoverer, he did achieve for himself a position there which gave him free scope for his labours, and which enabled him to win the regard, admiration, and esteem of all the most distinguished men of other countries. "I have," he says, in a letter addressed to Lord Wrottesley, "as a scientific man, received from foreign countries and sovereigns honours which surpass in my opinion anything which it is in the power of my own to bestow." In the same letter he says, "For its own sake, the Government should honour the men who do honour and service to the country." Personally, he was indifferent to the distinctions usually coveted by genius; and he felt that he had enough, if he had the means at his disposal to carry on a constant investigation of the wonders and beauties of nature, and to advance the progress of truth; and England was willing to leave him to this contentment, not having that love of glory,—or, as it is sometimes called in speaking of other nations, that vanity,—which takes delight in adding lustre to the illustrious among her sons, but rather that reasonable thrift which is bent upon making the most of their gifts at the least possible expense to the nation.

It may be well for the sake of a few readers who may be ignorant of the leading facts of Faraday's life, to give here a short summary of his scientific career; for, without that, his singular merits, his self-abnegation, and his devotion to a great calling, cannot be understood; without that, the absence of pretension, the constant consideration for others, the simplicity of life, the admirable control of temper, the true modesty and the humble faith which must be recognised in their combination as constituting his personal character, cannot be fully appreciated.

Michael Faraday was born at Newington Butts, near London, in 1791. He was placed in his boyhood under a bookbinder in the neighbourhood of Baker Street, and he read a large number of the books he bound; scientific books especially made a deep impression upon him, and the interest excited by Mrs. Marcet's "Conversations on Chemistry" turned his mind to the investigation of chemical phenomena.

He never forgot the gratitude due to her on this account. In 1812 Faraday was presented with a ticket for Sir H. Davy's course of lectures on Chemistry at the Royal Institution. He took notes of these lectures, and sent the notes to Sir H. Davy, expressing to him his strong desire to leave his present mechanical work, and to learn something of natural philosophy. Sir H. Davy was struck with the accuracy of his notes and with the expressions of his letter, and in 1813 he engaged him as his assistant in the laboratory of the Royal Institution. In 1821 Faraday made the discovery of the relations between electricity and magnetism, in which his subsequent researches were so important as to change the whole condition of electro-magnetic and chemical science. The construction of the electric telegraph was a practical result of his inquiries into the nature of electricity, and a discovery made by him in early days in the laboratory of the Royal Institution brought into existence those beautiful aniline dyes which are so important in the manufacturing world. His discoveries were announced in a series of papers in the *Philosophical Transactions*, beginning in the year 1831; and they were collected and republished in three volumes, appearing in the years 1839, 1844, and 1855. His book, called "*Chemical Manipulation*," was published in the year 1827, and was of great value to those engaged in the study of chemistry. In 1823 he was admitted as corresponding member to the French Academy of Sciences, and in 1825 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He received the gold medal of the Royal Society, and the Rumford medal. In 1833 he accepted a pension of £300 per annum from the fund at the disposal of the British Government for the benefit or reward of literary or scientific men. He received many marks of distinction from the Governments of foreign countries. He declined any actual title. In 1858 the use of a house at Hampton Court was granted to him by the Queen, and at this house, in the year 1867, he died.

No person could read with attention this bare outline of the life of Faraday, and fail to attribute to him high intellectual and moral qualities; but the simple telling of such and such abstract virtues in a man does not convey a sufficient idea of his individuality, and it is fitting that those who knew anything of him personally should strive to make some record of the attributes which distinguished him from other good and great men. He should be remembered in his characteristic phases; first, as he stood at the lecture table, with his voltaic batteries, his electro-magnetic helix, his large electrical machine, his glass retorts, and all his experimental apparatus about him,—the whole of it being in such perfect order that he could without fail lay his hand upon the right thing at the right moment, and that, if his assistant by any chance made a blunder, he could, without a sign of discomposure, set it right. His instruments were never in his way, and his manipulation never interfered with his discourse. He was completely master of the situation; he had his audience at his command, as he had



himself and all his belongings; he had nothing to fret him, and he could give his eloquence full sway. It was an irresistible eloquence, which compelled attention and insisted upon sympathy. It waked the young from their visions and the old from their dreams. There was a gleaming in his eyes which no painter could copy and which no poet could describe. Their radiance seemed to send a strange light into the very heart of his congregation; and when he spoke, it was felt that the stir of his voice and the fervour of his words could belong only to the owner of those kindling eyes. His thought was rapid, and made itself a way in new phrases, if it found none ready made,—as the mountaineer cuts steps in the most hazardous ascent with his own axe. His enthusiasm sometimes carried him to the point of ecstasy when he expatiated on the beauty of nature, and when he lifted the veil from her deep mysteries. His body then took motion from his mind; his hair streamed out from his head, his hands were full of nervous action, his light, lithe body seemed to quiver with its eager life. His audience took fire with him, and every face was flushed. Whatever might be the after-thought or the after-pursuit, each hearer for the time shared his zeal and his delight; and with some listeners the impression made was so deep as to lead them into the laborious paths of philosophy, in spite of all the obstacles which the daily life of society opposes to such undertakings. One instance of this kind is given in Dr. Bence Jones's volumes. It was a young lady who was thus inspired, and her case is not a solitary one. There are instances where a strong effect is produced by a speaker who is conscious of it and who strives for it; but with Faraday the effect was due to his unconsciousness, to his forgetfulness of himself, and to the concentration of all his intellect and all his emotion upon the thing he was teaching.

A pleasant vein of humour accompanied his ardent imagination, and occasionally, not too often, relieved the tension of thought imposed upon his pupils. He would play with his subject now and then, but very delicately; his sport was only just enough to enliven the effort of attention. He never suffered an experiment to allure him away from his theme. Every touch of his hand was a true illustration of his argument. Foreigners, children, and fine ladies felt as if they understood what he told them,—partly because of the simplicity and sincerity of his manner, and partly because he excited their enthusiasm so much that they did not question their understanding. But his meaning was sometimes beyond the conception of those whom he addressed. When, however, he lectured to children, he was careful to be perfectly distinct, and never allowed his ideas to outrun their intelligence. He took great delight in talking to them, and easily won their confidence. The vivacity of his manner and of his countenance, and his pleasant laugh, the frankness of his whole bearing attracted them to him. They felt as if he belonged to them; and

indeed he sometimes, in his joyous enthusiasm, appeared like an inspired child. He was not at all a man for evening parties; he was nothing of a ladies' man; but he was the true man for the juveniles, and would go to see a domestic charade when the boys acted in it, and suddenly appear behind the scenes to offer a little help or suggest a new arrangement; and then, while he was in front, he would laugh and applaud so loudly, that his presence was the best encouragement which the young performers could have. Or he would help the young people to wonder at the feats of a conjuror, or he would join in a round game, and romp quite noisily. But all was done with a natural impulse. There was no assumption of kindness, no air of condescension. It was before the appearance of the chameleon top in public that he constructed with his own hands a pretty little top with a coloured disc, and presented it to the son of a friend as a philosophic toy. The top still exists, and is put away in a box with some other precious things, and among these there is a toy green frog, which he brought himself to the same little boy, teaching him how to make it jump, and laughing merrily at the strangeness of its leaps. His quick sympathies put him so closely in relation with the child, that he saw with the boy's new wonder, and looked, and most likely felt for the moment, as if he had never seen the thing before. Quick feelings, quick movement, quick thought, vividness of expression and of perception, belonged to him. He came across you like a flash of light, and he seemed to leave some of his light with you. His presence was always stimulating. Occasionally a depression and weariness came upon him, such as these ardent natures often undergo. It is perhaps the balance of rest which nature sends to them; but when he had the physical strength to resist these attacks, he did resist them. His sense of duty and of religion forbade the indulgence of anything like despondency, and any mood that was otherwise than cheerful was soon banished.

The investigations of the natural philosopher are beset with difficulties, with anxieties and misgivings. Nature is sometimes so slow to answer his questions, that he is sorely tempted to answer them for her, and to let theory shut the door against fact, or to give fact admission with a tight squeeze. Hours, days, months may be spent upon the accumulation of discoveries which seem to justify their explanation by a particular process of reasoning, and just as the interpretation of causes appears to be reached, one other little stubborn fact may come in the way, like an obstinate jurymen, forbidding the conclusion;—and all the labour must begin again. To Faraday's ardent imagination such contradictions must have been trying. The rapidity of his thought was at times like a fever in his blood, and the moment which overthrew his hope was followed by physical prostration. But he had his Egerian grotto, where rest and comfort were to be found, and solaced himself at his domestic hearth. In

one of his letters he speaks of his "rest-giving wife," and it was with her that he found tranquillity restored when his soul was troubled. Free from the weak strivings of feminine vanity or of selfish ambition, she knew how to soothe him, how to make the leisure hour pleasant to him, and to offer him some new subject of interest when his work was too stimulating for him.

She would take a quiet stroll with him out of doors, or she would accompany him to an exhibition, and sometimes they would go to the play together. In his young days, Faraday used to attend Kean's performances with intense interest, and later in his life he used to admire the splendid representations of the Shakspearian drama, produced under the superintendence of Mr. Macready; and Jenny Lind's delicious voice occasionally charmed him to forget his cares. He loved music, had a fine ear, and could sing agreeably; indeed, there was hardly any form of excellence in art or nature to which his sensitive temperament was not keenly alive. He took great pleasure in a good novel, and some notes exist of a conversation upon this subject which he held with a friend at the house of Mrs. M——, in Clarges Street, one of the few houses where he was wont to appear now and then at an evening party. It was a winter evening, in the month of January, 1856. A favourite cat was in the refreshment-room, decorated with ribbons, and sitting in an arm-chair. Faraday, taking a glass of punch, presented it abruptly to the nose of the cat, and said, "Ah! you great silly cat, with your bow of ribbon, how do you like that?" The cat drew itself up offended. "Puss is not fond of punch," said Faraday, "but perhaps you are!"—addressing a lady who was playing with the cat; and then followed some talk which presently turned upon novels, and the entertainment to be got out of them, and Faraday said, "I like the stirring ones,—with plenty of life, plenty of action, and very little philosophy. Why, I can do the philosophy for myself; but I want the novelist to supply me with incident and change of scene, and to give me an interest which takes me out of my own immediate pursuits. It does a man good to get out of his daily pursuits, and to air his thoughts a little."

He then mentioned the novel of "Paul Ferroll," as having stirred enough in it, and added, "There's another modern one I like very well too, where a man keeps his mad wife up at the top of his house." This was the novel of "Jane Eyre;"—"and," said he, "it is very clever, and keeps you awake. Why, how good the woman's flight is across the fields; but there's a touch of mesmerism and mystery at the end, which would be better away."

This observation led to a discussion of modern superstitions, and Faraday spoke forcibly against the follies of table-rappers and turners.

"What a clumsy matter," he said, "is all this knocking of tables, this new way of calling up the spirits of the dead, through mediums who never tell us anything worth hearing. . . . It seems sickening

even for a sensible man to think of; but there is no end to the inconsistency and weakness of human nature. Why, there was the belief in witches; there were plenty of good and great men who held to that. Well! it was not worse than the rapping-spirit faith; indeed it was better,—there was more fun in it."

It was observed in reply that our present age had one superiority over the past;—we no longer burnt our fellow-creatures.

"Yes," said Faraday, "but observe that when the faggots went out, the witches went out. Why, all the sport was in the burning."

He then spoke of that curious story called the "Amber Witch," and this led to some further comments on romance writing, and to an eloquent eulogium of Sir Walter Scott. He spoke of "Ivanhoe," and said, "What a fine chivalrous thing that is! there's the tournament, and the Jewess, and the Templar, with his gallant bearing, and his strange mixed character, wonderful, perplexing as human nature itself! And then how finely those two serving men stand out in contrast,—the strong Gurth, and the witless Wamba, with their dog Fangs, who adds something too to the interest. Why, this is a romance indeed! Then there's 'Guy Mannering,' and 'Quentin Durward,' and 'Waverley,' and the poor 'Bride of Lammermoor,'—but that's a sad one;—and a whole host of others."

Then some remarks were made upon the novels of social life, and Miss Burney's "Evelina" was mentioned, and Faraday remembered reading it a great many years ago. "You know," he said, "I was a boy in a bookbinder's shop; there were plenty of books there, and I read them." He had himself bound some copies of "Evelina," and one of them was in the possession of the Rev. John Barlow.

Among the letters contained in Dr. Bence Jones's volumes there are a few addressed to this same Mr. Barlow, and it may be well here to say something of the nature of his relations with Michael Faraday.

Mr. Barlow was, from the year 1842 to 1860, the Honorary Secretary of the Royal Institution, for which post he was well qualified, both by his scientific acquirements and his social position. His knowledge of natural philosophy was extensive, and he took delight in cultivating the acquaintance of scientific men. He spent many hours in lecture-rooms and laboratories, and, at the same time, his wife's family connections and his own took him very much into general society, and he brought many persons to hear Faraday's lectures, who remained to listen, fascinated by their eloquence, but who, without Mr. Barlow's influence, would never have found their way to a scientific institution. His courtesy of manner, which proceeded from real benevolence of nature, made it pleasant to come in contact with him; and Faraday found him always ready to assist in smoothing over any little difficulties which occurred in the management of the institution. When the custom of giving tea in the library of the institution after the evening lectures was discontinued,

as being expensive and inconvenient, the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Barlow supplied the place of this hospitality by inviting the members of the Royal Institution, and other friends, to meet at their own house in Berkeley Street on Friday evenings. And here such unceremonious, friendly gatherings took place as are uncommon in London society. A remarkable variety of elements composed an agreeable whole.

Science and fashion, literature and aristocracy, had their representatives at the cheerful tea-table. Ladies coming from the lectures were not expected to be in full dress. There was no effort to be made. The definite aim was the comforting cup of tea. You might go as soon as you had swallowed it, or you might prolong the evening far on into the night. With so little of conventional restraint conversation flowed pleasantly, many acquaintances were made, and acquaintance easily passed into friendship. About twice in the season Faraday himself joined these parties, and added a good deal to their animation. But, agreeable as his presence was, it is not to be lamented that he went out seldom. His home life was better both for mind and body, and those who made that home so happy for him should be held in grateful remembrance. Although they lived much to themselves, the friends who visited them never failed to find a cordial welcome; and a friendly chat in those quiet rooms was one of the greatest pleasures which it was possible to enjoy. The frugal simplicity of the furniture was characteristic of Faraday. He would not put the institution to any expense which was not absolutely necessary, and the chairs and sofas maintained their rigid black horsehair surface to the very last. That Faraday's religion helped to make him the self-denying man he was cannot be doubted. His religion and his attachment to his wife were the main-springs of his moral life; they kept him pure and simple; they kept him also out of the world, and, therefore, that large portion of the world which is ignorant of everything beyond the pale of its own daily stir and strife, and its own ambitions, whether in political or fashionable life, knew nothing of this man and his work; and, being told of his death, as of a national loss, asked why, and what his life had been? To such as these the invention of a new patent for cutting cloth or mending pens appears a sensible, useful thing, and the author of it worthy of honour; of knighthood, or of whatever distinction many be available for him. Possibly they might make a stir even to obtain a pension for the inventor's widow, if he died and left a widow; but the discoverer of first causes, of eternal truths, of the forces of nature, of the basis of all invention, of the great foundations of all practical good, is not understood, and is viewed as one who indulges in useless curiosity, and amuses himself with dreams and speculations; they look upon the philosopher's investigations much as the silly school-girl, Rosa Bud, looks upon the scientific enterprise of her lover, Edwin Drood, when she speaks to him of one who hates "boilers and things."

Faraday, occupied with electric currents "and things," exhibits to them no definite purpose; and an important discovery, without an immediate adaptation of it, is held to be a mere vagary of the mind. This must be the explanation of the apathy with which the English nation heard of the decease of that great man who was perhaps her truest philosopher; while France, Germany, and Italy, better educated in science, were eager to express their appreciation of his worth. Such a man is born, not for one small territory, nor for one season, but for all countries and all times. Genius has no narrow birth-place. It is her vocation to knock down the foolish barriers of prejudice and nationality, and to claim the universe for her dominion. Between Faraday and the philosophers of other countries no difficulties arose; he never understood the meaning of the word jealousy, and as he acted in good faith, desiring nothing but truth, he was replied to in the same spirit. Those who worked with him became like him. Nor was his generosity kept, as in some cases it is, merely for exportation. He was the same with his fellow-labourers at home,—always courteous and always true. He knew when and how to forbear, and he also knew how to defend himself against injustice or misapprehension; but he was very rarely the subject of them. How independently, and with what dignity, he acted in the matter of his pension, when Lord Melbourne's proceedings were such as to try his temper sorely; and how well he conducted himself, when unjustly charged with appropriating some of Wollaston's scientific work is well known, and need not be further discussed here,—the rather that he cared little himself to rake up the dust of the past. His memory garnered up only the good. On one occasion, when some allusion to his early life from a friend, brought on the mention of a painful passage between himself and Sir H. Davy, he rose abruptly from his seat, took a turn or two up and down the room, and said, "Talk of something else, and never let me speak of this again. I wish to remember nothing but Davy's kindness." While he spoke tears shone in his eyes. None ever rose from a purer source.

Religion was the moving force of this man's soul. His religious feeling was not confined to any narrow circle; it had a range as large as that of the world itself; but his religious practice, the rites which he observed, and the modes of worship which he followed, belonged to a particular community of Christians known as Sandemanians, of whose form of faith it is desirable to give some description,—the more as it has been subjected to many misrepresentations. That very honest little volume, called "A Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World," by John Evans, supplies a narrative of the history and worship of the Sandemanians, from which the following account is derived. The sect originated in Scotland in the year 1728, and Mr. John Glass was the founder of it. He was a minister of the Established Church in Scotland; but he was expelled from it on the

ground that he was sapping the foundation of all national establishments, by maintaining that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world. Upon his expulsion his adherents formed themselves into churches, conformable in their institution and discipline to what they supposed to be the plan of the first churches recorded in the New Testament. Robert Sandeman, from whom the sect takes its name, was an elder of one of these churches in Scotland, and is the author of a series of letters, addressed to Mr. Hervey, upon the true meaning of the word faith, in which he opposes the doctrine of the Calvinists. A controversy arose on this subject, and those who adopted Mr. Sandeman's view, that faith is neither more nor less than a simple assent to the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ, that He was delivered for the offences of men, and raised again for their justification, called themselves Sandemanians, and formed themselves into churches, in fellowship with the churches of Scotland, but holding no kind of communion with any others.

The Sandemanians have a weekly administration of the Lord's Supper, a "love feast" of which every member is required to partake, and which consists of their dining together at each other's houses in the interval between the morning and afternoon service. A kiss of charity is used on this occasion at the admission of a new member, and at other times when it is deemed necessary and proper. They have a weekly collection before the Lord's Supper, for the support of the poor and for defraying other expenses. They have mutual exhortations, and they hold by community of goods so far that every one is to consider all that he has in his possession and power liable to the calls of the poor and the Church, and it is not lawful for them to lay up wealth for any distant or uncertain use. They allow of public and private diversions, so far as they are not connected with circumstances really sinful. They maintain a plurality of elders, pastors, or bishops in each church, and the presence of two elders is held to be necessary in every act of discipline and at the administration of the Lord's Supper. Second marriages disqualify for the office of elders.

The Sandemanians consider themselves obliged to separate from the communion and worship of all such religious societies as appear to them not to profess the simple truth for their only ground of hope, and who do not walk in obedience to it; and in every transaction they esteem unanimity to be absolutely necessary.

Such was the religion which Faraday inherited from his parents, and which he adhered to with unvarying attachment and perfect sincerity. The enthusiasm of his nature vivified his faith. He was an earnest disciple of the Church he belonged to, and in his later years he was himself an elder and teacher. But his zeal was not bigotry, and he neither condemned nor interfered with views which were opposed to his own. When he concluded a course of lectures with



expressions of adoration for the Creator of all good, it was done with a feeling so wide in its scope as to reach the heart of all humanity.

The friendship which existed between Faraday and Professor Tyndall is known to all who know anything of scientific men, and is in itself sufficient to prove that Faraday's faith was not illiberal. It must be accepted also as an evidence of the generosity and candour of his temper; for he took delight in all the manifestations of Tyndall's genius, and offered every encouragement to its operations within the walls of the Royal Institution. After he had ceased to lecture himself, he used to listen to Mr. Tyndall's eloquence with constant interest, and regularly attended his courses, until he was disabled from doing so by physical infirmity.

Professor Tyndall's beautiful "*History of Faraday as a Discoverer*" contains some traits of Faraday's personal character, which are valuable, and which, if they could be added to Dr. Bence Jones's collection of letters, might go a great way towards giving the reader a right conception of the man as he was in his daily life. Only the humour is absent—the peculiar, ironical humour which made Faraday's conversation pungent, though it never had the bitterness of satire. It was a light, genial humour, which came out of singularly vivid perceptions of all things,—of the characteristics of persons, no less than of the characteristics of magnets and gases. The slightest exaggeration or parade of enthusiasm towards himself excited his ridicule, and he would make fun of it, but with such a good-humoured gleam in his eye, and with such a frank, pleasant laugh, that his jesting was never ill thought of, and generally elicited merriment in return from the very person whom he bantered.

His spirit of independence, although it was very marked, kept clear of offence by its simplicity; for it was a part of his self-respect that he on no occasion withheld the respect due to others. He gave to a prince or to a duchess the observances due to their position, as he gave to his servants and to all around him, whether his equals or his subordinates, a fitting and consistent consideration. The late Prince Consort had a just value for his genius and his character, and had he rested with him to do honour to his memory, it would have been honoured sufficiently; but, unhappily, he was gone before. The Prince of Wales did what was in his power towards the recognition of Faraday's claims; but he could only act as a private individual. That he did act with spontaneous energy and warmth of feeling is a truth which ought to be remembered to his credit. When the news of Faraday's death reached him, he recalled the charm that he had felt in his lectures, and the genius and eloquence and geniality and animating vivacity which he had found in the teacher, and he forthwith wrote a letter of the kindest sympathy to the widow of the philosopher, although he had never seen her. The Prince's letter could not fail to gratify the wife who cherished every sincere tribute paid to her husband's excellence.

The statue which is to be erected as a memorial of Faraday is the result of the efforts and subscriptions of individuals. The Prince of Wales presided at the meeting held at the Royal Institution to discuss the national advantage of such a memorial, and the distinguished French philosopher, M. Dumas, came over from Paris for the occasion, and made an admirable discourse upon the extent and perfection of Faraday's genius, as free as Faraday himself from any kind of excess or bombast.

The Emperor of the French desired that the last new street which had been built in Paris should be named after the English discoverer, and possibly the Rue Faraday may sometimes excite the curiosity of English visitors concerning the history of their great countryman.

Upon Faraday's death, half only of the moderate pension which had been granted to him was continued to his widow, with the proviso, however, that it was to be carried on to another life. This sole narrow recognition of Faraday's achievements surprised the lettered world of France and Germany, and drew from them some comments not favourable to the discernment or to the gratitude of the English nation; but as such animadversions would be alien from Faraday's own habit of mind and from the temper of those who most nearly belong to him, it is best to refrain from dwelling upon them, and it is reasonable to believe that as general education advances the labours of a great man and their fruition will come to be better understood.

And here a pretty instance may be recorded of the feeling aroused by Faraday's presence, when he returned to his accustomed seat in the lecture-room of the Royal Institution, after a protracted absence occasioned by illness. As soon as his presence was recognised, the whole audience rose simultaneously and burst into a spontaneous utterance of welcome, loud and long. Faraday stood in acknowledgment of this enthusiastic greeting, with his fine head slightly bent; and then a certain resemblance to the pictures and busts of Lord Nelson, which was always observable in his countenance, was very apparent. His hair had grown white and long, his face had lengthened, and the agility of his movement was gone. The eyes no longer flashed with the fire of the soul, but they still radiated kindly thought; and ineffaceable lines of intellectual force and energy were stamped upon his face.

He used, until he was quite unable to do so, constantly to visit his friend, Mr. Barlow, who was attacked with paralysis at a time when Faraday himself was still enjoying tolerable health. He used to animate him with the vivacity of his conversation, though at times grave, but not desponding, thoughts would grow out of their discussions. On one occasion Faraday said, "Barlow, you and I are waiting,—that is what we have to do now; and we must try to do it patiently."

Sometimes he was depressed by the idea of his wife left without him,—of the partner of his hopes and cares deprived of him. She had been the first love of his ardent soul; she was the last; she had been the brightest dream of his youth, and she was the dearest comfort of his age; he never ceased for an instant to feel himself happy with her; and he never for one hour ceased to care for her happiness. It was no wonder, then, that he felt anxiety about her. But he would rally from such a trouble with his great religious trust, and looking at her with moist eyes, he would say—"I must not be afraid: you will be cared for, my wife; you will be cared for."

There are some who remember how tenderly he used to lead her to her seat at the Royal Institution, when she was suffering from lameness; how carefully he used to support her; how watchfully he used to attend all her steps. It did the heart good to see his devotion, and to think what the man was and what he had been. No self-educated man ever had less help from without; no scientific investigator ever worked with so little assistance. No man was ever so ready to give his time and service to his country; none ever did so much for love, so little for reward. Our daily life is full of resources, which are the results of his labours; we may see at every turn some proof of the great grasp of his imaginative intellect; remembering the achievements of his genius, we may look for future revelations of nature's truth with boundless hope.

If that genius had not been allied to most high and lovable moral qualities, it would in itself have deserved universal admiration. Joined as it was to an almost perfect Christian goodness, it must excite actual veneration, and a deep sense of gratitude for such an example of excellence as the volume of his life reveals, to kindle enthusiasm in minds capable of aspiring after the things which are great and good.

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### WAITING.

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THERE is her house. From the trysting stile  
It measures an endless half of a mile;  
Where I stand, like the sun through April showers,  
I can see the glow of her garden flowers.

Which of them all is like my love?  
The fairy-like bend of the tall foxglove?  
The bright pink's blush of the earth's best blood?  
Or the delicate warmth of the rose's bud?

She is not like the pink: not like the rose:  
She is not like any one flower that grows;  
But the beauty of all that the earth can bear  
Is gathered for her alone to wear.

W. H. P.

## IT GHELMEZ.

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WHOEVER may wish to verify the following portrait of our village of It Ghelmez by personal inspection of its features, let him, the next time he promenades the Asiatic shore of the Hellespont, take the first turning on the left looking westward after passing the Turkish pratique office at the Aspra Chomata, and climb even to the summit,—if his heart fail not,—of the pile of oolitic rocks which he will see standing, like a wall, between him and the distance. This altitude attained,—it is just 1,107 feet above the sea,—let him face about, and below him, to the left, he will obtain a bird's-eye view of the village, situated on a plateau sparsely wooded with ancient oaks; then, if the dust-and-ashes aspect of the devious lines of white, flat-roofed dwellings,—which, barring two Greek churches, the Konak, and a vast Valonia barn, constitute the whole architecture of the place,—does not deter him from exploring further, let him follow any one of the mazy goat-tracks that intersect the brushwood,—they all lead more or less directly to It Ghelmez. And although the village at close quarters fulfils but the promise of the distant view, the walk thither will well repay the trouble; for seawards lies a spreading panorama, and by the pathway itself are precious little nooks, wrapped in deepest shade of aged oaks gathered round a fountain trickling in the midst, and evergreening the sward, where, since the lithest sapling days of these gnarled patriarchs, devout pilgrims have knelt at the shrine of Agia Paraskeve. Away, where sea and sky converge,—just a purple stain on the zone of sunset red,—the sea-haze shrouds it by day,—is the peak of the Agios Oros; Lemnos and craggy Imbros are nearer, and towering Samothrace looks down on both. A tawny arm of Thrace, thrust out far into the blue, parts the waters of the Ægean, and forms the gulf of Saros and the Hellespont, whose hither verge lies hid beneath the tiers of vineyards and the broken ground that intervene between the cliff's foot and the sea. Lower down appear the shores of Troy, dreary and bleak, as though streams of centuries would never wash away the blight of war and bloodshed; where stand the grave-mounds of Ajax nearest, and,—beyond the Scamander,—of Patroclus and Achilles, by treeless Sigeum, whose heights rise like a watch-tower commanding sea and land. This quarter of the panorama,—arresting both eye and mind as well by its suggestive beauty as by the crowding associations which people it,—distracts attention from the eastward

view, where the blue thread of the Hellespont winds past the castles and onwards to the Marmora. Not that that view is deficient either in attractiveness or historic interest; but the beauty is detailed and the interest fragmentary, compared with that of the broad, richly-painted page of history lying open in the west,—tempting the imagination to speculate on what might now have been the aspect of the scene if, acting on his first impulse, Constantine had built a virgin city on the Sigeon promontory, instead of decking out old Byzantium in a new dress and giving her a new name. Fancy depicts the heights crowned by a citadel; studded with domes and spires; girt with ramparts; a twin fortress on the Thracian point; gardens and groves reaching away to Rhæteum; and a beacon upreared on the tumulus of Ajax marking the harbour at Æanteum. But this last is the weakest feature in the picture, for the land-locked harbour,—now Karanlik,—which sheltered the fleets of Agamemnon sixteen hundred years before, had in the time of Constantine dwindled away to little better than the marshy pond it now is; and doubtless it was the difficulty of constructing, or rather of maintaining, a port in that locality commensurate with the requirements of a new Rome, that dissipated this first fancy of the Christian emperor,—a fancy which, if realised, would have made our village of *It Ghelmez* a suburb,—the favourite summer resort, perhaps, of the wealthy,—of this projected Constantinopolis.

But although our village thus lost its chance of numbering with the haunts of fashion, it is entitled to aristocratic rank in virtue of its ancient birth and lineage. Rich in appellations, it is known by two names besides that of *It Ghelmez*, which, it must be explained, signifies “Dog comes not;” and indicates the precipitous nature of the sea-approaches, whose acclivities it would puzzle a dog to scale, and which are even by a tortuous path almost inaccessible to beasts of burden. Of the other two names, the one, *Giaour-Keui*, or “Village of the Unbeliever,” has fallen into disuse since the promulgation of the *Hatt-i-Humayoun*, which famous edict disestablished the obnoxious term *Giaour*; and the other, hailing from uttermost antiquity,—although it must be confessed that a little *bonne volonté* is required to trace it back,—is *Renkeui*, which is a derivative of *Ophrynum*, the name of a town coeval with ancient Troy. It may be that the title had remained unchanged till the advent of the Ottoman conquerors, who, seizing only the emphasised syllable “ryn,” travestied it into “ren;” and adding the Turkish termination “keui,”—signifying village,—achieved the double object of Ottomanising the place then and there, and of giving it a round mouth-filling name, euphonious to Turkish ears. Quite on the outskirts of the ancient necropolis stands *It Ghelmez*,—and perhaps the greater inaccessibility of the present site may have led to its adoption in preference to that of *Ophrynum*; for, when the waters of the Archipelago swarmed, as up

to a very recent period they did, with pirates and corsairs, the inhabitants of the villages of the seaboard,—impercipient of the poetry of their proceedings, and regarding these picturesque gentry not from a Byronic point of view, but with merely a prosaic appreciation of their cut-throat propensities,—took numerous precautions to guard against their marauding visits; and to this, perhaps, the change of site may be attributed. So closely, however, does *It Ghelmez* border upon *Ophrynum*, that it must be regarded as the modern version of that town, and credited with all the prestige due to an origin so ancient. Very, very gingerly let me whisper the suggestion (though *Dieu m'en preserve* that it should ever come to the ears of my reverend friend *Pappa Dhrosso*, the priest), that perhaps *Agia Paraskeve* only holds her present quarters by the favour and gallant forbearance of the manes of *Hector*. Certain it is, however, that a grove somewhere thereabouts was dedicated to him after his death; and in selecting the locality it is hard to believe that the friends of the *Teucrican hero* could have been blind to the unique attractions of the spot now dedicated to that sainted lady whose gentle shade chases away incipient blindness, and dispels all our tertian fevers without the aid of quinine.

Alas! the interior of the village, with its *rayah* population, is a far less pleasing subject for contemplation than its *alentours*. The *rayah* of the newspapers is to the *Sublime Porte* much what the negro is to the Government of the United States; equally irrepressible, equally bolstered up by parties whose political stock-in-trade he is, and who will not allow him to be contented under any circumstances whatever. But the *rayahs* of *It Ghelmez* belong to a tamer breed, whose nostrils have never snuffed the factions atmosphere of *Thessaly* and *Epirus*, but who, having vegetated for generations back in *Anatolia*, live in perfect harmony with their Turkish neighbours; equalling them in indolence, outmatching them in improvidence, and displaying their Christian superiority chiefly by their wine-shops and their dances, by their endless festivals, by the bells on their churches, and by the lax morals of their wives and daughters.

And these wives and daughters!—let me portray them while the vision yet haunts me of *Ellenco*, in a dark green fur-edged “*kodo*,” or jacket, and a bright yellow spotted gown, squatting against her cottage door; colour, just that of a healthy bull-frog in showery March; attitude, expression of countenance, and general appearance to match, only *Ellenco* wears pink calico trousers of baggy make which the bull-frog does not. The big *Valonia*\* barn is the place to see them in the season by scores,—picking, sifting, sorting, filling sacks and sewing them up; all the while chewing the acorn, whose

\* The calyx or acorn-cup of the *Quercus agrifolia*, used in tanning. Turkey exports upwards of ten thousand tons of *Valonia* annually, chiefly to the United Kingdom.

bitter-sweet nutty taste has, for those predisposed to discover it, a coarse resemblance to that of a raw chestnut. All these ladies,—you may count probably fourscore and upwards,—have their heads wrapped in one or more cloths or napkins. The cloths increase and multiply with the age of the wearer, who never removes the red skull-cap that forms the nucleus of the coiffure, but adds another cloth, and yet another, for every downward step on the ladder of life. A wash every two years or so is customary while the hair lasts; but when it falls, as it does at a comparatively early age, the wash is abandoned, and a knitting-needle, ably wielded, allays that irritation which has a tendency to arise in the scalp. *It Ghelmez* has long enjoyed a great reputation for the beauty of its women, but the present generation ill sustains this renown, for the village beauties might be counted off on the fingers of one hand; yet a close examination of the features of some of those old creatures in the far corner of the barn, whose knotty fingers fumble with the spike used for picking out the acorns from the cup, will enable an observant mind to conceive,—after making due allowance for wrinkles and squalor, for the wrecking effect on the face of intellectual vacuity, of fanaticism, and ill-temper, and for the ravages of paint,—that these spidery old hags might in their day have set all the youth of *It Ghelmez* aflame, with their straight noses and their low brows, their buds of lips, and their ripe peach-like,—jowls. [Ladies of the Levant, pardon an unhappy scribe who can find no softer name for that portion of the physiognomy which you possess in such perfection.]

At the age of nine or ten a daughter of *It Ghelmez* goes to light field work, and as her intellect develops she is promoted to Valonia picking. At fourteen she aspires to matrimony, and as soon as a suitable parti turns up she is affianced. Then the custom of the village prescribes that she shall thenceforth reside with the family of her fiancé; and a most pernicious custom it is, whose baneful fruits are too often manifested. Let us glance for an instant at the junior ranks in the big barn. Little of them is to be seen, only an array of eyes peering out from the cloths that envelop the rest of the face and head to protect it from the penetrating dust of the Valonia. The remainder of the costume may be briefly described as “scratch,” being made up upon no fixed principles; the most constant article of dress is, however, the baggy trousers, whose once bright tints are faded now, and whose pattern is marred by rents and patches. The nutriment of these syrens is homely in the extreme:—bread,—very coarse bread always,—relished in winter with olives or onions or raw salt fish; in summer, with figs, melons, or tomatoes; and when, in the fig season, a *tchelebi*,—the writer and reader of this paper are “*tchelebis*” unless the latter be of the fair sex, she is then *kokona*,—enters the barn at meal times, many a fig, whose sugary exudation is first hastily wiped off on the pantaloons aforesaid, is hospitably



proffered by hands small, sensitive, and symmetrical, but grimy with long-cherished dirt.

Clad in her working attire, the girl of *It Ghelmez* chats away merrily to her neighbours; but when the holiday clothes are donned, all-dominant female vanity takes possession of her mind, and she is full of jealousy and hatred for her rivals, which her untutored features, unlike those of the more civilised of her sex, are careless of concealing; and so it comes to pass that at the 'great dances, where a circle of some fifty damsels, circumvented by an outer circle of young men, performs its dreary oscillations,—one step to the right, two to the left,—the rigid lips of the danseuses utter nothing more gracious than an occasional exclamation emphasised by an impatient nudge, "*Νά μήν μοί παῖς μορή,*"—"Don't tread on me, wench!" which perchance will call forth a responsive nudge, and a denial of the accusation, "*Παναγία μὲν δὲν σὰς ἐμωοδήσω ἔγω,*"—"Holy Virgin, I'm not bothering you." In fact, the relations between these fair votaries of Terpsichore are of an explosive character; their most cordial aspect being that of an armed neutrality. Even the gallant sentiments of the young men in the outer circle of the dance, the expression of which is limited by the exigences of the measure to a casual pinch, fail to dispel the gloom that haunts the holiday faces of these demoiselles. A word ere we leave them about their toilette on these festive occasions. Their head-cloths are cast aside, but the nether garments remain, concealed by a skirt of bright-coloured stuff, or of printed calico, or,—oh! happy she who possesses it,—of that glory of glories red silk shot with green. A sort of fichu covers the bosom, and the costume is completed by the open "*kodo*" of gaudy-hued satin edged with fur. On the head is a string of gold coins, and the chevelure, parted into many wisps and plaited, hangs down, often to the knees, in such a cluster of tails, ladies, as few of you could help envying. But it is on the getting up of the face that the chief labour is bestowed. First, by the aid of a silk thread and some gum mastic all the down is torn from the cheeks, leaving them as smooth and shiny as a pippin; then a layer of white paint is laid on, after which the eyebrows are trimmed and treated with a dark pigment, being lengthened, or thickened, or otherwise aggravated, according to individual taste; then the eyelids are darkened, the cheeks empurpled with bad rouge, and the lips garnished with the same material. A tinge of henna on the nails perfects the whole work, and the young lady, hampered for the day with shoes and stockings, sallies forth to the dance. Dismally, hour after hour, the circle performs its halting revolutions, inspired by the measured thump of a drum, whose monotonous throbbings are relieved by the fitful screech of one or more fifes. These last instruments give forth their sound unwillingly, as the tumid and purple features of the performers testify; but when they do begin to shriek, there is at least no mistake about it, the noise

would be a match for any alliance between a peacock, a bagpipe, and a heavy train with the break on. Let us leave the ladies and their gallants to the enjoyment of this mellifluous music, and go back to the rayahs, whose claims to precedence were just now waived in favour of Ellenco.

With the exception of a stray foreigner or two the denizens of It Ghelmez are all rayahs, and the place is a fair sample of the villages of its class, or of so many, at least, as are to be found on either side of the straits of the Dardanelles. At It Ghelmez, provided the taxes are paid with tolerable punctuality, and the crimes and lawsuits kept within such modest bounds as beseeem a village of five hundred families, most of which are connected by intermarriage, no Mussulman official comes nigh us the whole year through. The chief difficulty is the payment of the taxes; for, with respect to lawsuits, we trust each other too little ever to have much at stake on the decision of any tribunal; and, as to crimes, of course they are very dreadful and very deplorable, but when once a crime has been committed, it is obviously absurd to make a fuss about it, since it redounds far more to the credit of the village to wash its own soiled linen at home, and to hush up all such disagreeable matters! Thus, but for the inevitable taxes, and the equally inevitable arrears into which they are ever falling, our community would be free of every phase of red tape, barring the infinitesimal dose of it which we take at the hands of our Tchorbadjî, whose rough-and-tumble administration assisted by the Iktyiar Medjlissi,—Council of Elders,—suits our views to a hair. But heavily taxed as we are, and with such long arrears to bring up, our periods of repose are brief; and the prison of Chanak Kalehsi ever numbers some of our villagers among its inmates. Indeed, more than once our Tchorbadjî and all the Medjliss have been put in limbo together, when the weight of those miserable arrears has completely overbalanced the patience of the pasha of the province.

It may be seasonable to state briefly what the taxes are, and why the villagers of It Ghelmez are always in hot water about them. Taking them then in the order of their importance, there is first the Ushûr, or tithe, levied upon every description of field produce, including such as is uncultivated, as gall-nuts, valonia, sumach, &c. But although this purports to be a tax of one-tenth, the vicious mode of its collection aggravates it to fifteen per cent. of the value of the crops. Then comes the Verghi, a tax of four per mille on real property, which is as reasonable in principle as it would be moderate in amount were it not that an arbitrary value, from three to five times greater than the property would realise if sold, is set upon it by the authorities, and the tax levied upon that valuation. Abuses of a similar character mar the practical working of the otherwise unobjectionable Timettou, or income tax, of four per cent. on

every man's estimated revenue. The Bedel, which is a capitation tax on males within certain limits of age for exemption from military service, completes the list. It is levied in a lump sum,—assessed in 1848,—on the whole village, and the share of each contributor is apportioned to him year by year by the Tchorbadji in Medjliss. The tax being a fixed sum for the whole village, and the population fluctuating, the individual contributions vary each year in amount, ranging from fifty to sixty piastres per head; and any Tchorbadji, who is unclannish enough to direct his dishonesty against the village, instead of against the government,—as is more commonly the case,—finds in the collection of this tax the most facile materials for his exploits.

Besides the above taxes, there is the Rushumat, which is levied on live stock of different sorts,—sheep, goats, and pigs,—and which was, in the first instance, intended to have been a tax of ten per cent. on the value of the animals; but as of late years the animals fetch a higher price than formerly, the percentage is reduced to eight. In the case of sheep the tax appears specially severe, as besides the Rushumat,—or Djelep, as the ovine subdivision of it is called,—Ushûr has to be paid on the wool. We will combine a résumé of these taxes with an instance of their application; taking the example from among the numerous class of small farmers who own as much land as they can till after the primitive mode of the country, with a single pair of oxen,—say ten to twelve acres,—who occupy a house in the village, and keep a flock of twenty-five sheep and as many goats on the hills.

Such a man's land would probably be worth ten thousand piastres, and would be taxed as worth thirty thousand. His house might realise five thousand piastres, but would be assessed at fifteen thousand. The average gross value of his produce in commercial currency will be about five thousand piastres, but when reduced into Beshlik,—the coin in which taxes are collected,—it amounts to 4,680 piastres. Out of this he has to pay:—

	Piastres.
Ushûr; which will amount to at least 12 per cent. . . . .	561 60
Verghi; 4 per cent. on assessed value of land and house, P. 45,000 . . . . .	180 "
Timettou; 4 per cent. on an income of P. 4,500 . . . . .	180 "
Bedel; for himself, and (say) one son . . . . .	100 "
Rushumat; 4 per head on 25 sheep, P. 100 . . . . .	} 175 "
" 3 " on 25 goats, P. 75 . . . . .	
Total taxation, amounting to nearly 26 per cent. on gross income	1196 60

Intrinsically these impositions would appear sufficiently burdensome; but their weight is further augmented by a multitude of incidental circumstances which cannot now be precised, since they affect different localities in different degrees, and do not admit of

generalisation. They must, however, be considered as parasitical evils adherent to the taxes themselves; while the causes before referred to, as keeping the taxpayers of *It Ghelmez* in perpetual hot water, have a distinct origin, and would suffice to render morbid the most healthy fiscal organisation. One of these causes is due to the taxes, the other two to the taxors, and the three contribute to make up the mass of "cussedness" which is,—the Turkish empire.

As to the first, inaction is the rayah's summum bonum; and idleness a part of his religion, since, Sundays apart, his church enjoins it upon him fifty-four days in the year, leaving him but two hundred and fifty-nine working days out of the three hundred and sixty-five. But as the rayah will not expose himself to winter weather, at least an additional thirty days must be deducted from the sum of his industry. Thus he aspires to earn in two hundred and twenty-nine days wherewithal not only to live for three hundred and sixty-five, but to admit of his spending fifty-two Sundays and fifty-four holidays playing backgammon in a wine-shop, and of his eating on those days food somewhat daintier than his everyday fare. Now if the rayah were a busy, pushing, improving man, he might pull through; but his indolent nature is not equal to the task; and thus, all his life long, he is running after lost time, and wrestling with obligations that have cropped up in his hours of idleness.

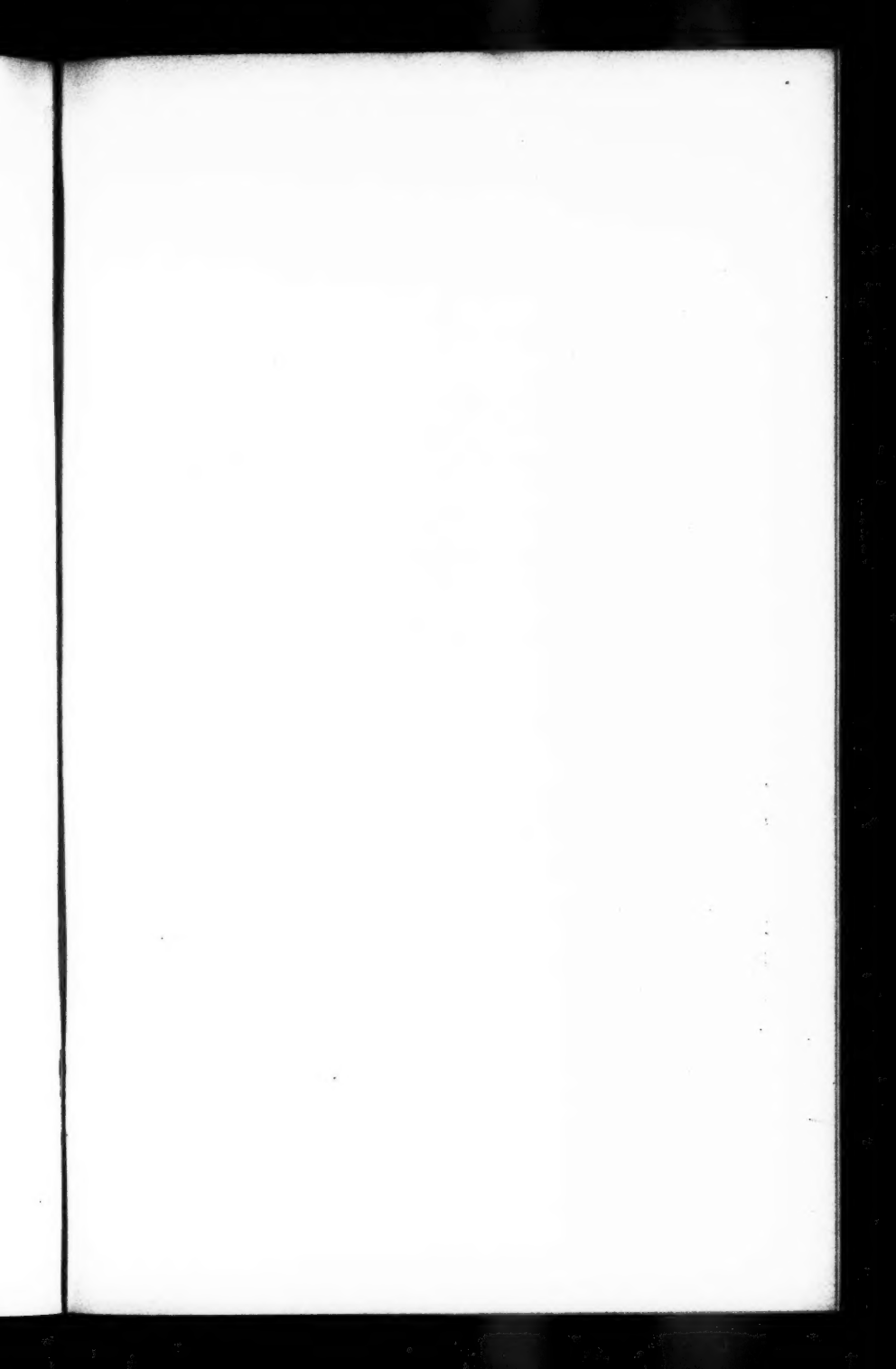
The second ingredient in the hot-water brew is "tick," or to speak more prettily, the manner in which the taxes are allowed to drift into arrears. This arises partly from departmental slovenliness, and partly from a mistaken leniency. The leniency would doubtless prove a boon if a single payment cancelled the tax once and for all; but where the calls are recurrent, such indulgence is obviously a mistake, and serves only to lead the taxpayer into a financial slough of despond. Leniency must have a limit; and the very nature of slovenliness is to seek a corrective in indiscriminating and spasmodic energy;—facts which the rayah usually discovers when the money that should have kept him clear has been dribbled away in idleness, when his arrears exceed his borrowing powers, and when he can only satisfy the now peremptory demands of the authorities, by the sacrifice of a portion of his capital,—his oxen, perhaps, or a field, or a portion of his flock. This point arrived at, there is before him a *facilis descensus, sed revocare gradum!*—it is simply impossible, where forethought, energy, and providence are wholly wanting for the effort.

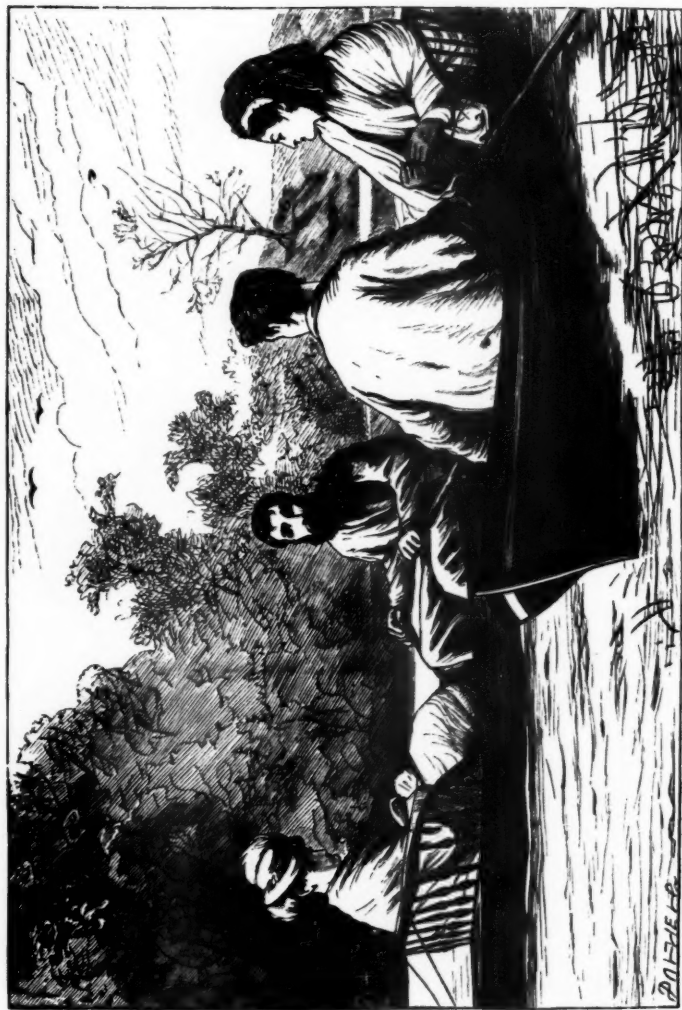
And the last of the trio is this,—that the advantage which the rayah derives from the Government bears no sort of proportion to the sacrifices he makes for its support. Religious toleration he enjoys; but with this single exception, he is debarred from every benefit which the powers of a State can confer upon the people. Even justice is but an abstract theory upon which laws and regula-

tions are framed ; having no existence as a living principle in any one department of the administration, judicial or otherwise. Let the laws be fewer and less silver-toned, and but a tinge of earnestness colour the dealings of the authorities, and the country will be the gainer ; for, as it is, the elaborate legislation of Turkey is but a toy invented to amuse protecting Cerberus, and draw off his attention from that real dominant barbarian spirit that knows no national grandeur save in the gold trappings and jewels of the monarch, in his piled-up palaces and lavish gifts.

It is Sunday morning. For two hours past the elderly dames of the village have been in the church, ostensibly listening to the fitful snufflings of my illiterate friend, the pappas, but keeping up meanwhile so smart a fire of gossip, that the devotional hours have gone merrily for all—save for that group in the south aisle, where in death's agony lies a young man whom the village doctors have given over, and whom his friends have brought here to die ; the slim, fair girl is Theodora, his betrothed, who watches him pale, tearless, and amazed ; wondering what has become of the boasted powers of those painted, halo-crowned saints whom she has been calling on savagely hour after hour to no purpose. Other maidens are still at home, laying on colour ; for a party of lads is coming over this afternoon from Kulafatli, with music, to dance. The Tehorbadji is impatiently waiting for the priest to come out of church and play backgammon with him in the wine-shop ; two Zaptiehs are going from house to house pressing for over-due taxes, and close in their wake follows a Jew dealer in produce on the look-out for bargains ; the little children are all in the vineyards hard at work,—on their own account ; where, if it please you to join them, reader, you will find some of the best grapes you ever ate.

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The other boat suddenly glanced alongside, and some one called her by her name.

*The Three Brothers, Clap. xiv. Page 230.*